

SONGS OF THE HEART.

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SONGS OF THE HEART

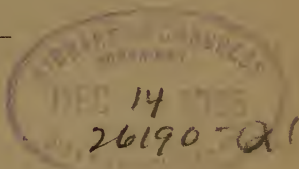
SUNG BY

ELVIRA SYDNOR MILLER.


WITH A PROLOGUE BY

DOUGLASS SHERLEY.

33



JOHN P. MORTON AND COMPANY,
AT CHRISTMAS, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY,
EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-FIVE.



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THE DEDICATION.

To My Mother.

THE PROLOGUE.

THE PROLOGUE.

POETRY, THE SINGER, AND HER SONGS.



I

POETRY.

It was at the Club one Saturday night; the hour was late—near 12 o'clock. Without it was damp, raw, and the wind was high; within, the early autumn fire was good to look upon, and exceeding comfortable to be near. The café was almost deserted. Three men, congenial spirits, were there seated close about a round table. The Wit was silent; the Jester in a resolute mood of gloom, and the third, he handsome of face and slow of speech, helplessly drifting about in a complex, unaided discussion of current fiction.

The outer door was flung open, and with the rush of cold air from without there came upon the three an intuitive feeling that some

magnetic man was near, some force yet lacking to make sweet converse, to give them new thought, new life.

He came like a whirlwind, almost outrunning the breath of winter which had slipped in at his heels.

He at once gathered them around him—these three men—and held them, and infinitely charmed them with his wonderful flow of more wonderful talk. The sparks from the forge of his genius flew upward and about, fast and furious. He was fresh from his desk, where he had spent the early hours of the night. On the morrow the world would read, breathless, what he had written. A word from his magic pen, and matters of State are made or broken.

There he was among them—his more serious work thrown aside. He was ripe for a full and free communion with the souls of men who could appreciate and understand him.

Need his name be told? Is he not the Saul in Israel, head and shoulders above his brethren? Is he not a man brilliant, powerful, and full of peculiar genius? In short, is he not our own Henry Watterson?

While he talked, one of the three asked him for his definition of poetry. Now, when half-way greatness is approached it hesitates before making its answer, and in every possible but most evident manner seeks to gain time. Not so with Henry Watterson; he was ready, and at once.

"Poetry," said he, now fairly into the white heat of a brilliant monologue, "is the harmonious Trinity of Intellect, Heart, and Passion."

Could a better answer be given?

"And, moreover," he swiftly continued, "Poetry is the brief and abstract chronicle of Human Life."

* * * * *

When they parted the night was full spent, and the gray, reluctant dawn of another day was at hand. The gifted talker had banished sleep, golden sleep, and given to each a thought, a golden thought, and now that thought is yours.

II

THE SINGER.

When a half-grown boy—about twelve years old—I was in the pigeon business, body and soul. It was my one thought by day, and my constant dream, asleep and awake. My next-door neighbor, just across the alley, Martin John Spaulding Smith (full name), was my full partner.

Our headquarters and pigeon-quarters were both high and humble—in my father's hay-loft.

In those days, Martin John, my own age almost to a day, was my hero. He knew so much more than I did, not only about pigeons, but about the big outside world. I was a home-bred youth, willingly held in bondage by the strings of his mother's apron—strong ones, too—while he was free to come and go, and do his own sweet way. To me, the pigeon trade—for we bought and sold in a reckless fashion—was a jealous and all-absorbing occupation; to him, the merest play, the easy gratification of a passing whim. In school my mind would

stray from its task and go rioting about the hay-loft, among the precious pigeons.

But there was, without doubt, another and more interesting phase to the life of Martin John. This finally dawned upon me and filled my very soul with pain and disappointment.

So one day, deeply wounded, I made complaint, and he, a confession. We were in the loft alone with our winged treasures.

“Yes; you’ve struck it,” he said, while with prodigal ease he tossed the yellow grain to the greedy birds about us. “I’ve got something else on hand—a sure ’nough something, too. It’s yours, if you swear never, double-never, to tell any body until it’s done.”

With the light of to-day, I am ready to confess that my young hero was a trifle theatrical and fond of effect; for the fast-falling rain made sweet melody on the roof above like the low music and red light of the stage, while, in obedience to his command, I made oath never to betray his secret.

Then in a whisper, while the pigeons fluttered about us and the rain fell in torrents, he told me of his new and latest passion—“*I am writing a novel.*” The words fell from his mouth

like a thunderbolt on my eager ear; they thrilled me with conflicting emotion, admiration, curiosity, and jealousy. In a tone of alarm I hastened to inquire, "Have you—have you a—a pardner?"

"Yes," he solemnly answered; and for the first time I heard the name of Elvira Sydnor Miller.

Martin John soon after this sold out to me his interest in the pigeons at a great sacrifice—so he told me. He did this in order that he might devote the more of his valuable time to this higher partnership in the walks of literature with little Miss Miller.

He had now lost interest (personal as well as financial) in Black-neck, Spread-tail, Blue-foot, Silver-wing, Gray-breast, and all the other beauties of the small but choice flock. Yet he almost daily haunted the old hay-loft. He would write his chapter, then come over and practice on me, read and re-read the most thrilling situations, greatly to my delight; and he always listened to my words of praise—crude, of high color, but without stint.

The story went bravely on: Two lovers—she, dark of hair and eye; he, light. Trials

of spirit; trials of flesh; adventures novel and full of interest. Still the story went on and on.

Long after the pigeon-loft had been abandoned, and the pigeons sold for debt (for financial ruin had overtaken me after the dissolution of partnership), the story went on and on. Indeed, the story was never finished. It fell into a hopeless tangle, and then the partners fell out. The rash lovers had gone upon an Arctic expedition, and stranded somewhere near the North Pole. Martin John, now grown weary of novel-writing, but fired with a noble ambition for base-ball honors, voted to leave the lovers to the mercy of frozen wave and polar bear. But Miss Elvira, although powerless alone to get them out of their frigid difficulty, stoutly maintained the gross injustice of such neglect on the part of those who had created them and gotten them into that uncongenial clime. At this period of the matter, Mr. Martin John Spaulding Smith's ex-partner in the late pigeon trade, openly, at peril of his neck, announced himself on the injured side of Mr. Martin John Spaulding Smith's ex-partner in the late novel-writing venture,

although she was until several years after an unknown Lady Fair.

So, it gives me a peculiar pleasure to write a prologue to the Songs of Miss Elvira Sydnor Miller.

While I may not help to bring again those long-neglected young lovers from the land of frozen wave and polar bear, yet it is my honored privilege to set forth the sweet melodies of the heart sung by that same little maiden, who, in the long ago, robbed me of my partner and who ruined my trade in pigeons; but who also awakened in my soul a desire to write about lovers and things.

Miss Miller, like most writers of either verse or prose, is different from her songs. They are tinged with the somber; nearly always veiled in misty shadows. She is gay, full of life, with a keen, delicious vein of delicate humor.

She is as yet better than the best that she has done.

She is closely related to the family of Edgar Allan Poe.

She is one of us—a Louisville girl; she is struggling for literary honors. She is a woman

of high purpose and noble aim. The ball-room glare and the seductive delights of society do not tempt her away from work; yet, she does not scorn the social charm of meeting men and women who are not mere fashionable Dawdlers. But, best of all, she loves nature; she loves the sunlight, the starlight, and the moonlight. She loves the grassy field, the blue hills, and the running water.

This, the singer.

III

HER SONGS.

Here they are, two and fifty melodies of the heart! They may be touched with faults, as doubtless there are imperfections here and there of verse and meter. But in them all there is a sweet and tender flow of heart-music; low, tremulous chords in a minor key, ready to charm away the Evil Spirit, if it be upon you.

There is about them something of a very old fashion. They are not idle babblings, for there is a purpose behind the lines. They are

free-spoken and democratic. They do not voice the fashion of the hour. They are not light and pretty verses of society—a woman at the ball, a man at the club—they are more serious, more earnest. They bring with them an odor of lavender sprigs; a thought of other days, the box of treasures long unopened; the dead Lore, the vanished faces of those we have lost.

“The Enchanted Stair-way” is a fanciful conceit in which the young moon

“Blows its silver about every where,” and in which the roses go trailing about the deep window-seat,

“Or, like dark Spanish maids, lean to listen
The bird songs that float o’er the hill.”

“A Dash Through the Lines” is a real poem. It is full of thought, heart, and passion. It is strong and dramatic. It is on the wide river

“Where the gun-boats peer with their eyes so yellow,
Like panthers loose on the sullen tide.”

It is the fate of a deserter, who rows them across, longing for a whiff of the Maryland clover, and who is shot:

"Good-bye to the Maryland fields of clover,
And—tell her—I can not—come—to-night."

The poem haunted me for days; and often, when least expected, a fragrant breath of that Maryland clover is blown against my face, and the fate of that hapless deserter comes back to mind with the roar of cannon, and "the gun-boats peer with their eyes so yellow, *like panthers loose on the sullen tide.*"

"La Senorita," the Spanish belle of Monterey, is an exquisite bit of Southern color, faintly suggestive of a dark and unholy passion. She calls her

"A perfect poem set to song."

"Good-Night," suggested by Marion Crawford's "To Leeward," has completely caught the spirit of the book. In this connection may be mentioned her poem, "Lady Brocade." Once a thought of mine crudely set found its way into print, and was caught up and idealized by Miss Miller, and her Lady Brocade is the result; to me, it is one of her best. One line is full of beauty: "The roses lean upward to meet her." Her power to perfectly comprehend a certain atmosphere and

to entirely enter and become a part of it is something remarkable. Indeed, this power exceeds her originality. She is more fanciful than original. Yet she is never guilty of any servile imitation—her sentiment is her own always.

“In the French Quarter” the music is pure and liquid; the picture delicately shaded, and richly suggestive of old Creole life. Listen:

“In this haunt of lights and shades
Woke the sweetest serenades;
Underneath these casements dim,
Barred by moonbeams long and slim,
After day-time’s jar and din,
Echoed lute and mandolin;
Then along the dusky street
Stole the satin-slippered feet
Of the quadroon beauties all,
Going homeward from the ball
In their jewels and their laces,
With the starshine on their faces.”

The personal poems have their own significance. In these her little nephews have a full share—Elliot Poe and Yandell Roberts. The convent school life of Mary Anderson, the pride of her people, is gracefully touched upon in “At the Play.” It is until now an

unsounded note in the life of this great actress.

"At Sunset" is a heartfelt tribute to our famous beauty, Mrs. Sallie Ward Downs, a woman of the world, but a woman of heart, ever ready with kind words and actions kinder still.

"In Memoriam" is given to dear, old Dr. Bell, who has gone from among us, leaving behind him for those who mourn him dead the vivid recollection of a stainless life, full of devotion to his profession and to his friends.

"The Dead Lily" is a lament over a young girl who died just on the other side of womanhood.

"Beautiful Dreamer" and "Under the Roses," is a plaintive monody worthy of the dead beauty so tenderly mourned by this singer, and by all who had ever touched her hand or looked upon her loveliness, in either life or death.

But the prologue crowds upon the play—a play of heart-strings and soft melodies.

DOUGLASS SHERLEY.

SHERLEY PLACE,
NEAR THE CHRISTMAS TIDE,
EIGHTEEN EIGHTY FIVE.

SONGS OF THE HEART.

SONGS OF THE HEART.

A SONG TO THE SINGERS.

AFTER SWINBURNE.

The day's last light is waning,
The sun hath flown the sky,
No more with splendor staining
The clouds that float thereby;
The tall grass thrills and quivers,
In sound of running rivers,
O'er which the red beam shivers,
And swallows westward fly.

The woods are drear and lonely,
Devoid of song or sound;
The trees hold silence only
Within each russet bound.
Down paths the day hath taken,
The leaves are flown and shaken,
From boughs by blooms forsaken,
That molder on the ground.

The roses turn their faces
Duskward and not to day,
And in the summer's places
Each red flame woos decay.
No lilies loom in masses,
White-shining down dim passes,
Through mists of mottled grasses,
That flow the woodland way.

Take hands and fly together,
To lands unsought by ships;
Go hence, 'ere winter weather
Sets silence on our lips.
We'll leave these somber places,
So shorn of gleams and graces,
Setting our longing faces
Toward where the rainbow dips.

The rivers may not stay us,
Nor sunset's waning fires,
Nor songs of earth delay us,
The smiters of sweet lyres;
Nor great winds surging chorus,
Nor hills that frown before us,
Nor stars that tremble o'er us,
Nor night's celestial choirs.

We are poor exiles only,
 This side the evening star;
And in song's temple lonely
 The money-changers are.
The silver sounds of singing,
Like larks toward heaven are springing,
Toward those blue lifts swift-winging,
 To 'scape earth's strife and jar.

The marts are filled with railers,
 Who rise on either hand,
The scoffers and assailers
 Walk forth across the land.
The fancies that we bring them,
The songs we fain would sing them,
Backward in scorn they fling them,
 Who may not understand?

Take hands and fly together,
 Oh! aliens, every one!
Bound in a viewless tether,
 Outlasting stars or sun;
Pause not for spring's glad sowing,
Wait not for flowers green growing,
Nor winds from warm lands blowing,
 Where summer's days are done.

Beyond the woods' green alleys,
That hold the sunset wine,
Beyond the hollow valleys,
The goal we seek doth shine;
Beyond all things diurnal,
Splendor of springtime vernal,
Changeless, sublime, eternal,
Gleameth one star divine.

Then haste 'ere winter closes
About the narrow way,
E'er frosts fling o'er the roses
The pallor of decay;
We must go singing thither,
Through fields where poppies wither,
Nor e'er returning hither,
Shall one foot backward stray.

Oh! leave earth's pallid portals,
Its sickly beams and blight,
Tread, like the lost immortals,
That path beyond the night;
No chains shall e'er enwind us,
No storms nor sorrows find us,
Only our songs shall bind us,
Who seek eternal light.

A DAY IN BOHEMIA.

Oh! for a day together
In the woods so still and green,
In the fairest summer
That love hath ever seen;
To watch the blue sky shining,
Where boughs are intertwining,
And sunlight falls, enshrining
The soft, sweet air between.

Oh! for the light and laughter,
The hours of dreamful ease,
The songs that follow after
The preludes of the breeze;
For joys too sweet to number,
For dreams that softly cumber
The folded wings of slumber,
As foam lies o'er the seas.

For one day, love, one only,
Thro' all the happy hours,
Ere laughter leaves us lonely,
Love's magic land is ours;
Too soon the world will call us,
Too soon its cares enthrall us,
Too soon its ills befall us
As frosts befall the flowers.

Leave colder hearts to hearken
The simple household lays,
Where leaves and branches darken
We'll list the strain Love plays;
Then vain the rise and falling
Of fireside voices calling,
While those sweet airs are thralling
The brightest day of days.

Oh! for a day together
In the woods and breezy dales,
In the fairest summer weather
Dawn fires or sunset pales;
Then with that day's declining,
To party like exiles pining
At sight of sunset shining
Upon some home-bound sails.

THE ENCHANTED STAIR-WAY.

In the gabled house, old and forsaken,
Filled with shadows mysterious and dim,
It clings to the bare walls unshaken,
Like a nest to the storm-beaten limb;
It is gay with the dust of the ages,
It is darkened by dampness and mold,
No longer my lady's gay pages
Trip down it in doublets of gold.

The light of the young moon advances
Through the casement that opes on the stair,
Till each ray as it shimmers and dances
Blows its silver about every where;
The roses outside faintly glisten
As they trail o'er the broad window-sill,
Or, like dark Spanish maids, lean to listen
The bird-song that floats o'er the hill.

I pause where the shadows are sleeping
In great purple heaps o'er the floor,
Like fairies some genii is keeping
In fetters of calm evermore;
And I gaze up that stair-way deserted,
Where the moon's silver drifting is massed,
And where too once flaunted and flirted,
The gallants and belles of the past.

No longer with jesting and laughter
They steal where the lamps glimmer wide,
With my lady's long train whispering after,
And my lord with his sword at his side;
No longer with bright, smiling glances
They move to the strain of guitars,
O'er their graves the wild wind-sprite now dances,
And their lamps are the torches of stars.

The sweet, broken music of childhood
Falls no more on my rapt listening ear,
For the children, like birds in the wildwood,
Have flown with the south-seeking year;
E'en the beauty in patches and powder
Shines no more all resplendently there,
The mists of oblivion enshroud her,
And the dust dims the gold of her hair.

No longer the rose lights of morning
The old oaken banister flush,
The spider hath woven its awning
O'er the pane where the sun used to blush;
The glad hearts whose voices enchanting
Thrilled the silence with madrigals sweet
Have flown, and but echoes are haunting
The stair-way oft kissed by their feet.

They have flown with their joys and their sorrows,
Those people who tripped down the stairs,
Flown with rains and with suns of the morrows,
Like flowers from the cold wintry airs;
They have gone, yet the stars softly glisten,
And, half-shrouding the broad window-sill,
The roses they loved once now listen
For the songs and the steps that are still.

So I turn me to go, for the shadows
Circle o'er me in black, eerie hosts,
And the moonbeams are weaving their ladders,
Whose rounds seem to glimmer with ghosts.
Yet the gloom of the long vanished ages
Hovers o'er me as homeward I stray,
And the laugh of my lady's dead pages
Rings down the old stair-way for aye.

MY LADY'S PICTURE.

By the curves of a road fringed and skirted,
Half embowered in the greenness of leaves,
Stands the manor house old and deserted,
With the moss creeping over its eaves;
The glow of the sunlight illumines it
At the dawning and death of the day,
The lilies' sweet breathing perfumes it,
As they nod 'neath the blue skies of May.

Through the doorway o'ergrown with rank grasses
I walk down the wide hall alone,
And a wind from the west softly passes
Where the steps of the dancers are flown;
I gaze on the dim pictured faces
That beam out from old tarnished frames,
While the breeze seems to ruffle their laces
And whisper their grand English names.

There is one face that looks out serenely
From the background all somber with shade,
With the small head so graceful and queenly
As if for a coronet made ;
The pearls on her low bodice glisten,
A rose lies asleep in her hair,
As she leans forth half smiling to listen
The songs of the birds stealing there.

I linger in silence and wonder
What her rank and her history may be,
For surely some secret lies under
The smile she bestoweth on me ;
What name had this beauteous lady,
Was it Dorothy, Ellise, or Kate ?
Did she walk in these gardens so shady ?
Did she lean o'er the vine-covered gate ?

Methinks I can see her advancing
Through the maze of a grand minuet,
While the viols make music entrancing,
Whose echoes seem lingering yet ;
Like the scent of the last summer's roses,
She brings back the glad days of yore,
Like a rose too, her beauty discloses,
Till I sigh that her blooming is o'er.

Though I stand here forever before her,
She gives not the answer I seek ;
Yet my spirit bows down to adore her
While her soft, golden locks kiss her cheek.
I may gaze on this beautiful mystery
As a poet looks out on the sea,
But the laughter and tears of her history
She will never disclose unto me.

A SONNET.

Farewell! thou tender, lingering light of heaven,
Prisoned within the city's gloomy walls,
I watch thy fading splendor as it falls,
A benediction from God's altar given :
Fain would I follow where thy footsteps fly,
Gladly would leave the proud world far behind,
With thee to seek a land my dreams enshrined
Beyond the golden uplands of the sky—
Yet all in vain, this longing to be free,
The aspiration, only, follows thee.

GOOD-BYE, SUMMER.

The mist lies white along the hill,
But in the woods the winds are still,
Save when erewhiles some light breeze stirs
The dusky thickets of the firs;
The beeches lift each leafy limb
Like pillars in cathedral dim,
While through the green enlacement glows
The lingering sunset's gold and rose.
Here where no wandering feet will pass
I lay me down upon the grass,
And raise anon my tired eyes
Toward far blue fields of paradise.

The beech-nuts dropping to the ground
Shiver the air with rifts of sound,
While lazily across the moss
The spider spins its silken floss.
The flowers are gone, the dogwood blooms
No longer 'mid these forest glooms,
And on the tall plumes of the ferns
The red rust of the autumn burns;
Adown untrodden woodland ways
The sumachs like great torches blaze,
And maples streaked with yellow beam
Make brighter still the sunset dream.

The blue knob lifts its pine-crowned crest
In lonely grandeur toward the West,
And fired with gold, I see the way
Were once we two were wont to stray.
Oh! hand in hand we roamed together
In time of Indian summer weather,
And climbed far up that rugged steep
To watch the fair day fall asleep;
Beneath us stretched the lonesome land,
Encircled by a purple band,
While all the wide West seemed to be
A fairy-land across the sea.

The glory and the grace are shorn,
And all the great woods stand forlorn,
Since joys that made life's holiday
With thy lost friendship passed away.
I will not scale the hill to see
A heaven that shines no more for me,
And where the wind with plaintive moan
Laments a gracious presence flown.
E'en as I watch the sunset change,
I do recall a face grown strange,
And down the dim aisles dream I hear
Thy footsteps flying with the year.

The skies grow wan, the woods are still,
The last gleam darkens on the hill,
And light and splendor flee afar
To lands beyond the evening star.
Farewell, fair summer, evermore;
Farewell, ye golden days of yore!
Lost friend, what shall I say to thee
Who gazed on fairy-land with me?
Vainly I strive to frame in speech
A message words may never reach;
Vainly I strive to break the spell
That holds me yet—good-night, farewell!

SUNSET IN THE BAYOU.

We moored at sunset near the shores
Where trailing mosses swept the oars
And branches of magnolia trees
Hung o'er us greenest panoplies;
Behind us lay the tranquil bay,
Made rosy by the western ray,
And clasping in its deeps afar
The silvern shadow of a star;
The soft wind as it rose and fell
Scarce woke the evening's peaceful spell,
While on our ears it smote erewhiles
Like hymns that haunt some lonely aisles.

Through vailing curtains of the moss,
That flung its ghostly folds across
From tree to tree, the swamp shone dim,
A shadow on the sunset rim;
We peered into each dim retreat,
Untrodden save by spirit feet,
Where tangled vines and matted canes
Did sentinel the silent lanes.
Far off we marked the scarlet gleam
Of leaves that caught the dying beam,
And blossoms white shone thro' the glooms
Like moonlight on tall lily blooms.

Around the swamp's mysterious edges
The water whispered 'mid the sedges,
Whose purple shadows softly gave
A twilight to the dreaming wave;
Encircled by this eerie rim,
By waving mosses, dusky, dim,
The bay upon its heart did hold
The sunset's shield of burnished gold;
It caught the pink tint of the skies,
The new moon blown in paradise,
And e'en the stars' faint light was given
To glorify this mimic heaven.

We gazed in silence, spirit-stirred,
While singing in the swamp some bird
Flung all song's silver on the air
That lingered tranced and spellbound there—
Oh! first it rose up in long bars
To serenade the dreaming stars,
Then, sinking to a whisper, stole
Athwart the shadows gray and cold;
Like bells in airy summits rung
Those strains of ecstasy were flung
To break in sweetness evermore
Upon some viewless elfin shore.

I listened, and I thought, Ah! me,
In those dark days ere men were free,
Here in this swamp some slave hath heard
The singing of yon wondrous bird?
Perchance at sunset's dying gleam,
Half waking from some fearful dream,
Upon his strained ear fell each note
(God's voice within the song-bird's throat).
Oh! hearkening to each tender strain,
What dreams of joy came back again,
While thro' his veins the blood did bound
In ecstasy—oh! hush!—a hound!

A DREAM OF ARCADEE.

They wandered by the lonely shore
At breaking of the sullen day,
Watching the dull-winged sea-birds soar
Athwart the clouds of filmy gray ;
The sun rose like a fiery star,
Staining the waves with colors bright,
Till far across the harbor bar
Outstretched a trail of glittering light.

Two looked to sea with wistful eyes,
Planning a voyage long and sweet
To some vague isle of paradise
Where Love might rest his tired feet ;
Where all the gladsome days of gold
In nights of silver should be set,
And joy would like a flower unfold
Unchilled by any sad regret.

But when a year had flown away
 One reared a tower so white and fair,
Where Love sat sobbing all the day
 Beside a lone grave, brown and bare;
One only strayed along the deep,
 For she who dreamed of Arcadee
Just as the sunset fell asleep
 Had sailed alone across the sea.

LA SENORITA.

I saw her on a golden day,
The Spanish belle of Monterey,
When first her beauty's glad surprise
Dawned like a glory in the skies.
'Twas sunset on the Alamo,
Where Senoritas come and go,
Each looking with coquettish glances
From lace mantilla that enhances
Their beauty, as the soft moss throws
An added splendor 'round the rose.

A high comb in her raven hair
Held one red blossom prisoned there,
And round her neck an amber chain
Had caught the sunlight's golden rain;
The dusky bloom of throat and chin
Was like a flower with wine therein,
The glad spring in her step, the South
Glowed in the rose of cheek and mouth,
While over form and face was thrown
A spell the coldest heart must own.

She passed serenely through the throng
A perfect poem set to song,
While e'en her waving fan had taught
Some voiceless love, the speech it sought;
She did recall a night of stars,
Soft serenades 'neath lattice-bars,
A rose flung silently below
Where slept the moonbeam's drifted snow,
Low whispered vows, for love to mark—
A dagger thrust made in the dark.

I watched her as she moved apart
And left a winter in each heart,
Then sighed half-sadly, "As the flower
Hath grace and beauty for an hour,
So she, this radiant new-comer
Is but the blossom of a summer;
Like Joshua I would command
Her sun of loveliness to stand,
For one so beauteous as she
Should bloom in immortality."

AFTER THE FIGHT.

'Twas evening, and the fight was done,
The guns' hoarse thunder died,
While softly shone the setting sun
O'er Shenandoah's tide ;
It lit the trampled grass with light
Where steeds and riders fell,
No more to gallop to the fight
Their proud hearts loved so well.

We searched the bodies of the slain
With loud, exultant cries,
Each hoping from the dead to gain
Some rich and valued prize ;
Then finally we turned away,
Where, close beside the stream,
A Yankee captain smiling lay
As one who did but dream.

One man his pistol quickly took,
His watch another grasped,
Another ope'd his coat to look
On that the cold hand clasped—
There stained with blood-drops from his breast
We found a portrait fair,
As if in dying he had pressed
The senseless image there.

It was a woman's lovely face,
So young, so pure, so glad,
Recalling with its tender grace
Some charm the springtime had;
While written underneath we read
Words with sweet meaning rife—
The day on which the two were wed,
Her name who was his wife.

We gazed in silence every one
Upon that girlish grace,
While sinking fast the setting sun
Illumed the dead man's face.
The spoiler's eager hand was stayed
By that pathetic sight,
And down some rugged cheek there strayed
A tear-drop warm and bright.

Then he to whom belonged the prize
 Knelt down and gently pressed
That lovely face, those tender eyes,
 Close to the sleeper's breast.
No hand was put forth to deter,
 No voice raised to deride,
We only thought—God pity her
 Who was the dead man's bride.

The Shenandoah proudly rolled
 Beneath the heaven's blue shield,
And covered with the springtide mold
 We left him on the field,
To sleep in silence there apart
 Beyond the jar and strife,
Still clasping to his faithful heart
 That picture of his wife.

COMING OF THE SHIP.

When my ship comes in from sea, I said,
When my ship comes in from sea,
The pearl shall shine on my love's fair head,
And her mantle of silk shall be;
For now she wreathes with the roses red
The bright locks waving free.

When my ship comes in from sea, I cried,
Oh! so far away and dim,
I shall see it float o'er the waters wide
Toward the sands with their silver rim;
And my love shall watch it by my side
As it gleams on the billows' brim.

When my ship comes in from sea at last,
And the warm light gilds it o'er,
The stars shall glimmer above the mast
As the moon shines over the shore,
While the sorrows and cares of the gloomy past
Shall vanish forever more.

When my ship comes in all the lutes shall wake
To bring joy home again,
And songs shall fall as the roses shake
Their leaves in the silver rain,
Oh! just as the face of a flower doth break
Thro' the covers its blushes stain.

Oh! fair will the bloom of the evening fall
Athwart the lonesome land,
Sweet voices out of that ship shall call
Like bugles across the sand;
And my love shall shine like a star in the hall,
With gems on her wrist and hand.

Oh! all the windows shall gleam and glow
Like stars in the summer deeps,
Like rainy ruts in the road below,
Where the red of the sunset sleeps,
Like Alpine summits, when o'er the snow
The flush of the dawning creeps.

And my love and I to the songs shall list,
In that hall where the feasters sup,
As each strain upfloats like a golden mist,
Or as wine in a crystal cup,
Sweeter than flowers by soft winds kissed,
When the white moon rises up.

All this I said as beside the shore
I waited to greet mine own,
And scanned the horizon o'er and o'er,
Where it flamed like an opal stone ;
But my fair love came to the sands no more,
She pined in her bower alone.

Oh ! the ship came in at the evening fall,
But the pearls and jewels rare
I cast at her feet, and the funeral pall
Was the silk that she might not wear ;
So she 'd know the ship came in after all,
Should she waken and find them there.

A DASH THROUGH THE LINES.

A royal night for the row before us,
The moon goes down in a bank of cloud ;
One star to westward trembles o'er us,
Wrapped like a corpse in its pallid shroud.

The lamp burns dim in the fisher's dwelling,
Filled with the Southern refugees ;
Hist ! to the cannons' thunder swelling
Far away on the tired breeze.

I can hear the creek's black waters lapping
The sandy beach and the wooded shores,
And the dying wind like a night-bird flapping
Its dusky wings o'er the idle oars.

Five miles off is the wide, wide river ;
Five miles off the Potomac flood ;
I can scarcely tell why I pause and shiver,
Dragging the boat up out of the mud.

'Tis a risky thing we're about, old fellow,
Deserters afloat on the river wide,
Where the gun-boats peer with their eyes so yellow,
Like panthers loose on the sullen tide.

'Tis the last, last time I shall venture over,
Risking my neck for the gold so bright;
Just one long whiff of the Maryland clover,
One last dash through the lines to-night.

Lift up the lantern and hold it steady;
Call out the women, and children, too;
The moon is down and the boat is ready,
But the blockade running is yet to do.

All aboard! push off now quickly,
We must hug the shore till the river shines;
Look, where those lights burn pale and sickly,
Over there are the Union lines.

I can see the river straight before us,
Muffle the oars, nor cry, nor speak;
Let us hurry on, through the darkness o'er us,
Into the river and out of the creek.

Woman, hush! there are foes behind us,
The wolves are seeking their prey abroad;
Quiet the children, or death will find us—
For you the water, for me the cord.

Hist! 'tis only the black waves creeping
Under the stern of our trusty boat;
The Yankee gunners must all be sleeping,
To leave us here on the tide afloat.

God be thanked! we are half way over,
Near at hand are the welcome shores,
I can smell the blooms of the Maryland clover;
Row for the land, now bend to the oars.

Haste! make haste, ere the gray dawn whitens
Over the east, for I dreamt last night
I walked through a land that no beam e'er lightens,
With a troop of specters gaunt and white.

I must reach the shore, but to look once only
On a face upraised to the skies above
'Mid the green woods there, in her cottage lonely,
Waiting to greet me is she I love.

She—there's a light—hush, hush, no screaming,
Keep quite still in your places here;
'Tis the lamp from a prowling gun-boat gleaming
Over the waters far and near.

Make for the land—strike out—they've seen us.
Zip! 't was a cannon's deadly hiss;
But there's many a watery gap between us,
They may fire again—so they fire and miss.

They're bearing down on us sure and steady,
Zip, zip, zip—how the water boils!
Crouch, so the next shot finds us ready--
A few strong pulls and we 'scape their toils.

We'll hurry in where the bank curves under
That fringe of trees whose long bows enlase,
Then, while their cannon boom and thunder,
We'll seek the woods for our hiding-place.

A few more strokes and we leave the river,
The land lies there where the long waves swell;
God! how the balls ricochet and shiver,
Till the air is strong with the powder's smell.

One stroke more—oh! my God, 'tis over!
That last shot told; ah! they aimed aright.
Good-bye to the Maryland fields of clover,
And—tell her—I can not—come—to-night.

NOTE.—This poem is founded on an actual occurrence. When my mother ran the blockade, during the civil war, the deserter who took her across the Potomac was shot and killed in the manner described.

If the "sincerest flattery is imitation," I could pay my friend Henry T. Stanton no higher compliment than to take the meter of his "Bourbon Horse-Thief" for this poem.

E. S. M.

THE SONG WEAVERS.

Looking o'er some dusty pages,
This brief sentence there I saw :
" Let me make a nation's ballads,
He who will may make its law ; "
One who uttered this wise saying,
Sought life's sweeter, nobler part,
Thus to be a minstrel playing,
And his lute the human heart.

From the opening of fate's portal
Till our joys and cares are o'er,
Love doth make all things immortal,
Glorifies them evermore ;
That which stirs some tender feeling,
Be it gladness or regret,
To each human heart appealing,
That a people ne'er forget ;

That which makes some fancy dearer,
 Calls forth smiles or tears at will,
Brings some cherished idol nearer,
 Time but renders sweeter still;
So the strain the poet fashions
 For song's sake, and song's alone,
'Mid the jarring chords of passion
 Keeps its own celestial tone.

Pride may scorn and envy slight it
 For some gold-bought minstrel's claim,
Yet a deathless love shall write it
 High upon the walls of fame;
Little matters fault or failing
 Of the poet to the throng,
They but see him through the veiling
 And the glamor of his song.

Where fair France lies, glad and vernal,
 'Neath the sunlight's golden ray,
By the firesides shrined eternal,
 Is Lizette of Beranger;
From flushed May-times to Decembers,
 As the fleeting years take wing,
Fondly every heart remembers
 Her the poet used to sing.

In the Scottish peasant's dwelling
Highland Mary lives once more,
Some rude voice grows soft in telling
Burns' great love-song o'er and o'er;
Though old Time has never faltered
Since her charms by him were sung,
Though all other things are altered
She is ever fair and young.

Irish eyes grow dark and tender
As the "Harp of Tara" swells,
Of past glory, of lost splendor,
Each pathetic accent tells;
Care and famine lose their terrors,
Hope recalls the dreams of yore,
All a country's wrongs and errors
Breathe in those dear songs of Moore.

If with homesick fancies yearning
Our tired hearts would cease to roam,
Oh, how fondly the returning
Exile wakens "Home, Sweet Home!"
Eyes grow dim and white lips quiver,
Blent are locks of gold and gray,
As "Upon the S'wanee River,"
Memory goes far, far away.

Oh! to write what love will cherish,
Time and sorrow make more sweet,
Some poor strain that can not perish
While one human heart doth beat;
Song and singer may not sever
While the bright sun shines above,
And the minstrel lives forever
In the strain he breathes for love.

GOOD NIGHT.

SUGGESTED BY MARION CRAWFORD'S "TO LEEWARD."

"Good-night," she softly said, "good-night;"
The starshine trembled o'er the floor,
The red rose listened at the door,
And swept across her robes of white;
She stood there in the tender gloom,
Fair as a lily just in bloom,
And I, poor fool, I did not see
She waited but one word from me
To pause or hasten in her flight—
"Good-night," she softly said, "good-night."

"Good-night," she softly said, "good-night;"
The wind came sighing from the sea,
It stirred the green leaves dreamily
That swayed and murmured in the light;
She turned with slow, pathetic grace,
And soon the shadows veiled her face;
Then with each whisper of her dress,
Fled life's one dream of happiness,
Yet even as she stole from sight,
"Good-night, she softly said, "good-night."

“ Good-night,” she softly said, “ good-night ;”
The moon shines sadly o’er the wave,
Recalling that last smile she gave,
Who was for all the world’s delight.
Where is she now? I may not tell,
The cold grave keeps its secret well :
Still falls the starshine o’er the floor,
Still doth the red rose haunt the door,
I only know that ere her flight,
“ Good-night,” she said, “ a last good-night.”

P A N .

Where is Pan? I pray you answer,
Where is he, the laughing god?
He, the singer and the dancer,
Dancing where the green trees nod;
Through the forest's shade and brightness
Down the glades where echoes call,
Past the lilies' aisles of whiteness
I will seek the god of all.

Stillness here is, save where passes
Some faint breeze grown tired too soon,
Sighing 'mid the waving grasses
Silvered by the rising moon;
Oh! the young moon, how it blazes
Like a great fire far away,
Girt with softly purpling hazes,
Tremulous with songs of day.

Where is Pan? I hear the laughter
Of the hidden waters near,
As they sing and follow after
Piping gods they held so dear;
Oh! how fair the faint light hovers
Through the green boughs o'er the stream,
Where the leaves sing soft like lovers
Breathing love-songs in a dream.

Lingering 'mid these glades enchanted,
Lo! I wait the footfalls fleet,
Sounding down the ways once haunted
By the music wild and sweet;
By the brookside Pan would linger
Bathing in the moon's white glow,
Fashioning with skillful fingers
Pipes whereon to call and blow.

From the oak-tree gnarled and olden
Dryads peered to list the sound,
Sprites in lilies' hearts so golden
Echoed back each jocund round;
What the birds sing now he taught them,
Language of the earth and air;
In their leafy nests he sought them
With the vine-leaves in his hair.

Down each windy haunt and hollow
Rang the wild notes of his pipe,
Till the breezes rose to follow
Through the fields when grain was ripe ;
Oh! what melody, what gladness
Thrilled in every rustic note,
Riotous with music's madness,
Blown out from a silvern throat.

Now, alas! his form hath vanished
From the bright haunts of the past,
From the forest ways are banished
Strains too beauteous to last ;
Nevermore his feet will wander
Where the leaves laugh overhead ;
In some lost land over yonder,
Silent, songless, Pan lies dead.

IN THE FRENCH QUARTER.

(NEW ORLEANS.)

Down each little dusky street,
Where the house-tops nearly meet,
And the warm light falls erewhiles
O'er the bronze and ruddy tiles,
I will wander to and fro
Through the scenes of long ago,
List to some chanson-Creole
Falling on an air of gold,
While the Mississippi's tide
Loiters past the court-yards wide,
And the amber sunset pours
Through the stained glass of the doors.

'Neath this balcony of stone,
Where the orange-trees have thrown
All the whiteness of their bloom,
All their exquisite perfume,
I can fancy that I see
Some dead beauty smile on me ;
Fan in hand she lingers near,
With a rose behind her ear,
While a truant love-lock slips
Past the heaven of her lips,
Till I can but pause to greet her—
This enchanting *Senorita*.

In this haunt of lights and shades
Woke the sweetest serenades ;
Underneath these casements dim,
Barred by moonbeams long and slim,
After daytime's jar and din
Echoed lute and mandolin ;
Then along the dusky street
Stole the satin-slippered feet
Of the quadron beauties all
Going homeward from the ball,
In their jewels and their laces,
With the starshine on their faces.

Winds that blow from off the seas,
Steal through quaint green jalousies,
Bend the slim narcissus stalks
By the lonely court-yard walks,
Where the violet's blue rim
Gleams about the fountain's brim.
Some lithe negress turbaned fine,
Like a bronze the skies outline,
Greets you on your languid way
With a softly breathed "Entrez,"
And with most exquisite grace
Bids you welcome to the place.

Sweet it is to wander down
In the heart of old French Town,
Past the quaint Cathedral walls,
When the vesper music falls;
Past the Bishop's ancient palace,
Brimmed with memories as a chalice;
Past the stately "Lover's Palm,"
Looming in the rosy calm,
While the white sails gleam amain
O'er the blue of Pontchartrain,
And in "Congo Square," to-day,
Wait the dance for "Blas Coupé."

Oh ! the witchery that lies
O'er this Creole paradise,
O'er this wonderful "French Quarter,"
By the Mississippi water ;
Clinging to the very last
To the glory of the past,
To the laughter and the tears
Of the sweet, forgotten years,
To the love-songs breathed by lips
Silenced by the grave's eclipse ;
All that shrines itself apart
In the dreaming poet's heart.

A SPANISH CASTLE.

In my loneliest hours I am haunted
By a dream of a castle enchanted—
A castle that looks on the sea;
Around it the green waters clamber,
Its turrets are bathed in the amber
Of sunsets that brighten for me.

I see it as twilight is falling,
And echoes sweet bugles are calling
From out of the late, frosty air;
Oh! softly it rises and brightens
In a country the snow never whitens,
For the home of the summer is there.

Bright lamps in the casements are glowing,
Through wide halls faint music is blowing
And drifting away toward the West;
The young starlight shines on the towers
That dream over gardens of flowers—
The flowers that my heart loveth best.

Oh! they blossom in indolent fashion—
Red roses that tremble with passion
And prison the bright dew within;
They list to the sound of the dancing,
To the light feet retreating, advancing,
And the beat of the soft mandolin.

Thus the vision arises before me
When the glamor of dreamland is o'er me,
And the cares of the day are no more;
It is reared by some builder immortal,
Who looks forth from turret and portal
For white sails that fly toward the shore.

Perchance in some quaint, fairy story,
Some legend that time maketh hoary,
The name of this castle may be;
Perchance in the dim, starlight ages,
In the days of princesses and pages,
It stood just as now by the sea.

I know not what region enshrines it,
What blue mist of sky-land confines it,
Though it haunts me again and again;
Yet I fear this fair vision that rises,
And my fancy enchants and surprises,
Is only a castle in Spain.

KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN.

Oh! softly o'er each purpling hill
The gray of evening stole,
Yet down the west there lingered still
Faint, gleamy bars of gold;
The camp-fire, like a ruddy star,
Glowed 'mid the shadows dim,
A brook came rippling from afar,
And sang its ceaseless hymn.

We gathered 'round the faggots bright
To watch the fading beam,
Far o'er the peaks fell the silvery light
That veils the evening's dream;
The yellow moon rose slowly up
With a slumberous, mellow glow,
And spilt the wine from its golden cup
Upon the mountain's snow.

Then some one swept an old guitar
Of quaintest Spanish make,
Till many a sweet, prelusive bar
The twilight hush did wake.
Kathleen Mavourneen softly fell
Athwart the quiet air ;
That tender song I knew so well,
True love's immortal prayer.

The singer's voice was coarse and rough,
But what care I? For oh!
The heart spoke in it ; 't was enough.
And with his murmurings low
The past came stealing back again,
The dreams of other hours
Rose up before me with the strain
That trembled o'er the flowers.

I saw once more the little cot
Half nestled in the leaves,
And heard the song that 'round the spot
The robin deftly weaves ;
Once more the light of tender eyes
Shone through the window-bars,
While overhead in paradise
Hung silvery mists of stars.

Yet still the weird old ballad rang
Beside the firelight's glare ;
The others heard the strain he sang—
I saw her standing there.
My love, my love of long ago
Shone on my dazzled sight,
As some pure star at eve might glow
In calm, unclouded light.

The red glow flickered o'er her face
And her hair so soft and brown,
While with the old pathetic grace
Were the tender eyes cast down.
Oh ! I sought to clasp the shadowy form
Of the vision strange and fair,
While the music rose like a wailing storm
In the same heart-breaking air.

She stepped from the past and its eerie throng
To stand in the rosy ray
Till the music ceased, then with the song
My dead love stole away.
So I thought, as the minstrel ceased to sing,
Are there other hearts than mine
To whom this tender strain doth bring
A grief that is half divine ?

A SONG TO -- WHOM?

I know not if I e'er shall find her,
The being whom my fancy seeks,
Yet in my heart I have enshrined her,
And in my happy dreams she speaks;
Ever her fair face shineth near me,
When dawns unfold and shades retire,
Yet when I call she does not hear me,
The object of my heart's desire.

I see her in the sunset's splendor,
She lingers near the moon's white bars,
And oh! her smile is far more tender
Than twilight with its dreamy stars;
She sits beside my chimney-corner
And gazes downward in the fire,
While lights and shadows wait upon her,
The object of my heart's desire.

With flowers of springtime she returneth
To wander 'mid the woodlands green,
And where the rose of summer burneth
The glory of her face is seen;
She flies before me down each hollow,
When autumn tunes the year's sweet lyre,
While all the birds and west winds follow
The object of my heart's desire.

Whether I be awake or sleeping,
Sweet thoughts of her are with me too,
Like stars their constant vigils keeping
Within my soul's own heaven so true;
Though e'er before she is fleeing,
I follow on and never tire,
Pursuing still this one fair being,
The object of my heart's desire.

Perhaps some golden day I'll meet her,
Her whom my faithful thoughts revere,
And in soft silence I shall greet her,
So dearly sweet, so sweetly dear;
Then, gazing in her eyes so tender,
To no far heaven need I aspire,
Enough that I have found my splendor,
The object of my heart's desire.

"THE GUN OF THE PIONEER."

The sword shines bright in the castle hall,
The blade that hath won the fray,
While the banners droop like a funeral pall
In the light of the dying day;
My treasure hangs by the cabin-door,
On the horns of the fallen deer,
Where the rose of the sunset mantles o'er
The gun of the pioneer.

I take it down with a tender hand,
This weapon my grandsire bore
When he drove the Shawnee from out the land
By the old Kentucky's shore;
His hunting shirt of the buck's skin made
Veiled a bosom that knew no fear,
And the comrade he took through the forest glade
Was the gun of the pioneer.

It rang 'mid the tangled bush and brake,
It pillowed his head at night,
And its voice the birds from their sleep did wake
In the gray of the dawning light.
The savage crawling upon his track,
Where the mists hung dim and drear,
Was sent like a wounded reptile back
By the gun of the pioneer.

Its barrel flashed 'neath the sunset veil
Through the trees in the dark lagoon,
When my grandsire followed the redskin's trail
By the side of old Daniel Boone;
Oh! the women's shrieks and the children's cries
As they crouched in dismay and fear,
Were changed to a laugh by the sharp replies
From the gun of the pioneer.

The Shawnee squaws by the wigwam door
Stood waiting their braves in vain,
From the blood-stained thickets they came no more,
By the hand of the trapper slain.
When the winds of the summer were softly stilled,
And the dew-drop shed its tear,
The painted braves of the tribes were killed
By the gun of the pioneer.

Now the trappers go on the trail no more,
For the day's wild work is done,
And the ring of their rifles along the shore
Has died out one by one ;
They have gone from the homes they loved so well,
From the places their hearts held dear,
But memory has woven a deathless spell
'Round the gun of the pioneer.

The sword may shine on the wall like a star,
Where the banners droop softly o'er,
But my grandsire's rifle is dearer far,
As it hangs by the cabin-door ;
Though the barrel is covered with blood and rust,
I touch it with love and fear,
'Twas the trapper's creed and the trapper's trust,
This gun of the pioneer.

Its noisy thunder has died away,
For the touch of time hath quelled it ;
Yet, though its bearer seemed but clay,
'Twas freedom's hand that held it ;
The right to our own Kentucky soil,
To the land that will own no peer,
Was won on the war-path's fierce turmoil
By the gun of the pioneer.

So I lift it up in the sunset glow,
This weapon so true and tried,
And it seems like a voice from the long ago
That tells how our fathers died.
Oh! who would exchange for love or gold
This relic the brave held dear!
And where is the hand that is fit to hold
The gun of the pioneer!

THE VANISHERS.

In the woodlands where spring was awaking
The leaves and the flowers from their sleep,
And the trees their pale blossoms were shaking
O'er the path where the moss sought to creep,
In those haunts where the wind lost its keenness,
Where the glades caught the sun's early beams,
Even there, 'mid the stillness and greenness,
I gazed on the spirits of dreams.

Like the sound of the waters in falling,
Like the sigh of the winds in the grass,
Like the voices of birds faintly calling,
Was the stir of their wings as they passed;
The young, leafy boughs bent before them,
The pine-trees' complaining grew still,
And the rose of the sunset fell o'er them
As they fled with the winds o'er the hill.

Like the strain of an anthem celestial
We may hear in some exquisite dream,
So to me, a poor exile terrestrial,
Did the light of their presences seem,
As I watched them departing together,
Sailing on through the air's crystal space,
Going home in the soft golden weather,
With the light of the sun on each face.

Thus they passed from the echoless places,
From the glades that their light feet had pressed,
From the waters that mirrored their faces,
Ere they flitted away toward the West,
As I stood there alone and dejected
While the dew silvered over the pine,
And each drop caught a star and reflected
Its light like a lamp at a shrine.

Through the wind-haunted wood and the hollow
'Tis in vain we would seek to pursue,
Far swifter they fly than we follow,
And the sky veils them o'er with its blue;
The sunset and mist are their covers,
The stars gild their path with soft beams,
While the moon's silver flame ever hovers
About the lost spirits of dreams.

In visions the poet beholds them,
Sweet thoughts that ne'er blossom in speech,
And the minstrel in slumber enfolds them,
The songs that his lute may not reach ;
The painter hath dreamed of their faces,
Though no canvas to fix them were meet,
And the sculptor recalls their lost graces,
Though the stone may not prison their feet.

'Mid the gloom of cathedrals forsaken,
Where no incense hangs purple and dark,
The gold from their bright hair is shaken,
Like the dew from the wings of the lark ;
They smile through the bars of a prison,
They roam in the woodlands by night,
Where the torch of the moon newly risen
Flickers down o'er their garments of white.

He may seek, but, alas! never find them,
These phantoms we long to enfold,
For the halls of the sunset enshrine them,
The clouds fringe their pathway with gold :
Lost ideals our fancies would cherish,
Too fair for life's blight and decay,
Like the visions of childhood they perish,
They are dreams, and as dreams pass away.

THE DAY IS DONE.

No longer o'er the white Christ on the altar
The red light like a benediction falls,
No longer do I watch the glory falter
Across the saintly faces on the walls;
There is no singer chanting hymns supernal,
Peans of triumph o'er the conflict won,
Silent the palace of the Great Eternal,
The day is done.

Two lovers pass adown the shadowed places,
Treading in fancy love's enchanted land,
And with the dying splendor o'er their faces
I see the children go by hand in hand;
Yet do I linger, while in every dwelling
The fire-light brightens with the fading sun,
And loving lips to loving hearts are telling
The day is done.

An aged couple, feeble, bowed, and hoary,
Pass by me in the soft, uncertain light,
All ended now is life's pathetic story,
They are but waiting for the coming night;
Down the long aisle their footsteps slowly falter
And die upon the silence one by one,
While angel voices whisper from the altar,
The day is done.

"THE STAR HAS FALLEN."

"The star has fallen," so we say
Full oft on many a summer night,
When one vague, silvery shaft of light
In dim blue reaches fades away.
But, ah! so many stars hath heaven,
So many splendors o'er it gleam,
It misses not that one ray given
To gild some slumbering seraph's dream.

"The star has fallen," so I cried,
When standing by their lonely grave
I watched the wistful sunset lave
With golden floods the headstone wide.
Oh! thou wert e'er my heart's sole light,
My splendor, my own starry beam,
Yet thou did'st leave my life in night
To gild some slumbering seraph's dream.

THE SONG IN THE WOODS.

When the Cherokees and Ross', their chief, were carried under guard toward the Reservation, they were accompanied by John Howard Payne, who sang "Home, Sweet Home," in the woods at night. When he ceased singing, the guards threw down their arms and allowed the Cherokees to depart alone.

'Twas night, and in the Georgia woods
The rain fell softly down,
Wetting the tall trees' leafy hoods
Of ruddiest bronze and brown;
The pines loomed up against the grim
Weird background of the sky,
While faintly through each spectral limb
The wandering winds did sigh.

Crouched in the shadow of the trees
Beneath the heaven's wide vault,
A band of captive Cherokees
Had made a sudden halt;
The camp-fire with its lurid glare
Lit up the dismal place,
Lending the dusky figures there
A wild, barbaric grace.

The old chief and his pale-face friend
Beside the pine-knots lay,
Watching the lights and shadows blend,
While some few yards away
The guards, like statues, idly leant
Against the dripping trees,
Their heads on drooping shoulders bent,
Their guns stretched o'er their knees.

Oh! silence hovered like a pall
About the dismal scene,
While overhead the rain did fall
The leafy gaps between;
When suddenly, the pale-face there,
Beside the smouldering fire,
Began to sing a well-known air,
The winds his only lyre.

'Twas "Home, Sweet Home" the minstrel sang,
And every silvery note
Adown the dusky forest rang,
Till from the glades remote
Some echo caught the tender strain
That rose so sad and sweet,
Only to waft it back again
Unto the singer's feet.

Yet still he sang, and every tone
Brought unto each the last
Sweet memory he had called his own,
Far in the golden past;
The savage faces softened down,
As silently they listened,
Till on their cheeks so worn and brown
The heart's bright tribute glistened.

They caught not all the tender words,
The pale-face stranger sang,
Yet in their ears, like notes of birds,
The strains pathetic rang;
The old chief turned his head away,
To hide the falling tear,
While closer to the firelight's ray
The guards crept up to hear.

The gun had fallen from each hand,
And soon the motley throng
Were linked as brothers in a band
By that familiar song;
Once more the captive Cherokee
His native fields did roam,
Once more beside his mother's knee,
The white heard "Home, Sweet Home."

And as they listened unto him,
The weaver of the strain,
Their manly eyes grew blurred and dim,
They joined in the refrain
That like a mighty anthem rose
Upon the darksome night,
Till blended tones of friends and foes
Surged round the gates of light.

Still are the Georgia woods once more,
But vanished from the scene
Are they who, in the times of yore,
Roamed 'mid their alleys green ;
The pines uplift their gloomy shades,
The rains so softly fall,
But ah ! no more adown the glades
That song's sweet echoes call.

Vanished the captive Cherokees,
In western wilds they roam,
Vanished the guards who bent their knees
In homage to "Sweet Home ;"
And he who stirred the heart's still deeps
Beside the pine-knot's light,
In sight of heaven's great camp-fire keeps
His songless watch to-night.

THY LOVE IS OVER ALL.

Glad bells have rung the New Year in
And told the old good-bye,
And o'er this darkening world of sin
The stars come out on high ;
Methinks from these wide fields of light
I hear sweet voices call,
Faint-singing through the peaceful night,
Thy love is over all.

The sailor's children calmly sleep
Like sea-blooms on a stem,
And far off on the swelling deep
Their father thinks of them ;
And though the mighty north wind blows,
The rains unceasing fall,
Deep in his trusting heart he knows
Thy love is over all.

The lonely mother gently lays
 War's rusted weapons by,
As through the window softly strays
 The glory of the sky ;
What though no footstep glads her ear,
 Her name no voices call,
Yet still she knoweth thou art near,
 Thy love is over all.

Thy gifts are boundless as the sea,
 A most exhaustless store,
They have no limit or degree,
 But bless both rich and poor ;
The beggar, starving at the gate,
 The noble in the hall,
Alike upon thy mandates wait,
 Whose love is over all.

Upon the waters and the land,
 Through darkness and through light,
We follow e'er thy guiding hand
 Toward realms beyond the night ;
And though life's cup with tears we fill,
 And death's grim shades appall,
Thou art our God, our Father still,
 Thy love is over all.

THE INCA'S SONG TO THE SUN.

Splendor of morning, that exultant takes
Thy pathway o'er the heavens so wide and free,
Torch of the sunset, that far westward slakes
Thy red flame in the silence of the sea,
Oft have I waited on the hill-tops gray
To watch thee hurl the dawn's dim gates ajar,
While night, like some black phantom stole away,
And left no trace save one faint glimmering star.

For thee the flowers unfold, and towards thy feet
The wandering minstrels of the air upsoar,
Winged songs that through the halls of heaven ring sweet,
And flood with music all the skies' blue floor ;
For thee the ice melts ; aye ! the frozen bands
That fetter up the freedom-loving sea
Recoil in thunder on the shivering lands,
And once more set the great, wide waters free.

Thou makest the shifting clouds at sunset turn
From rose to scarlet, like an opal's face,
By golden ladders in a golden urn
Thou drawest the rains up from their resting-place.
Oh! I have deemed thee some great god, bright sun,
And sought to follow up thy glittering way,
But doubt came o'er me when the day was done,
And thou hadst faded like earth's forms of clay.

Thou art, like me, the servant of some great,
Some far-off god, whose face no mortal sees,
Who in an unknown region holds his state
Beyond the earth and seas immensities;
Aye! such thou art, proud minion of a king,
Resplendent orb, whose light the wide lands crave,
The same strong fetters round about us cling,
And, like myself, thou too art but a slave.

STREET MUSIC.

At the entrance of an alley,
Filled with shadows dark and cold,
Where the sunbeams scarce could rally
Their bright phalanxes of gold,
Where the people knew no laughter
In their lives so bare and gray,
And but silence followed after,
Once I paused to hear him play.

He seemed haggard, old, and weary,
As he stood there in the shade,
While from hovels dim and dreary
Came the listeners as he played ;
Children with unchildish faces,
Toil-bowed men and women who,
Softened by no tender graces,
Only want and hardship knew.

Thus they crowded round to hearken,
And at some familiar tune
Suddenly their eyes would darken
With strange tears that fled too soon;
Yet he played on, all unheeding,
Songs that brought his daily bread,
Strains that rose like voices pleading,
Following where the minstrel led.

Even as I watched him playing
To his brethren, the poor,
Suddenly the sun came straying
Past each gloomy hovel door,
Lighting all the noisome places
With the splendor of its ray,
Lending e'en those sickly faces
Charms they wore not yesterday.

Silently the golden glory
Lingered o'er the listeners there,
Like sweet ending of a story
Or the answer to a prayer;
And beneath its yellow glancing
Woke the children's long-lost glee,
In and out they wandered, dancing,
Filled with sudden ecstasy.

As if to enhance their pleasure
Then he played on, one by one,
Many a sweet, familiar measure,
While above all shone the sun,
Gilding for an instant only
With the splendor of its light
Those poor lives so bare and lonely,
Groping onward towards the night.

Strangely thoughtful, I departed,
Fearing they might spy me near,
Feeling strangely heavy-hearted
As the sounds died on my ear;
For I saw how he whose playing
Sounds unheeded at our door,
There, in that black alley straying,
Brought the sunlight to the poor.

LOVE AND FAME.

I.

I heard the people praise me as they went
Forth from the gates and left me all alone,
Sitting in silence after they had flown,
While 'neath the crown they gave my brows were bent;
Outside my window-pane I saw a child
Clinging unto its mother's ragged dress
Till, as she felt its little soft limbs press
Against her knees, she kissed its face and smiled;
And I, this seeing, crown and songs had given
For that poor woman's vision of a heaven.

II.

I sat outside the darkened door alone,
The sun was setting and the house was still,
With naught but silence each wide room to fill,
No face was there whose smile might greet my own;
E'en as I sat, behold! I saw her pass,
The woman in her ragged gown; but lo!
The child she kissed so fondly months ago
Slumbered beneath the brown autumnal grass;
Poor mother! sighed I, as she stole by me,
Pass on, pass on, no more I envy thee.

FAREWELL, SWEET DAY.

The last red gleam has faded from the casement,
The roses slumber on the trailing spray,
Dimly the sky shines through the leaves' enlacement—
Farewell, sweet day.

Flown are the birds that waked thee with their numbers,
Flown with the sunset down the heaven's blue way,
In silence, then, go seek thy place of slumbers—
Farewell, sweet day.

Vanished are they, the glad and happy hearted
Who sought thy swift flight by their songs to stay,
To some vague country they have all departed—
Farewell, sweet day.

E'en as I watch thee close thy golden portal,
My heart o'erflows with thoughts I may not say,
So songless must we part, oh! great immortal—
Farewell, sweet day.

A BROKEN SONG.

I linger 'mid the silent glades
When all day's cares are done,
While through the beech-tree's leafy shades
Glimmers the setting sun;
The lily slumbers in the mould,
The birds fly o'er the hill,
Dark grows the twilight air and cold,
Why art thou silent still?

The rose has withered on its stalk,
The faded petals fall
Like tears along the garden walk;
The vine clings to the wall;
The wind that wanders from afar
With autumn's breath is chill,
For thee my heart grows home-sick; ah!
Why art thou silent still?

I sought thee 'mid the ball-room's glare
 Beneath the lamp's red glow,
Where music drifted on the air
 Like sunlight o'er the snow;
Rare forms of beauty met my gaze,
 Yet none thy place could fill—
Where art thou, joy of other days,
 Why art thou silent still?

Fair faces linger by my side,
 Soft laughter woos mine ear,
But in this world so broad and wide
 'Tis thou alone art dear;
Awake or sleeping, evermore
 Thy name my heart must thrill,
Oh! darling of the days of yore,
 Why art thou silent still?

ONE NIGHT IN OCTOBER.

The late, sweet air is calm and still,
The moonbeams whiten on the hill,
While o'er the woodlands bare and brown
The silver of the stars drifts down ;
Each leaf that trembles in the air
Seems carven from the blueness there,
And where the purple pines uploom
Are dusky aisles of faint perfume ;
Dimly through openings overhead
The light from heaven's far lamps is shed,
As on some ancient minster walls
The glory of the tapers falls.

The road curves onward like a snake,
Past echo-haunted bush and brake,
While every rainy rut afar
Prisons the splendor of a star ;
The tall trees fling their raiment o'er
Expanses of the earth's brown floor,
And far off, from some reedy marsh,
The frogs call out with voices harsh,
That echo down the dark lagoon
And put the silence out of tune,
While o'er the sharp rim of the hill
The round, red moon hangs low and still.

Memory recalls with fond delight
A long-gone-by October night,
Its silver stars, its ruddy moon,
The noises from the dark lagoon—
E'en this wide road that wanders on
Past thickets whence the flowers are gone.
I do recall, we two had ridden
Forth from the noisy town unbidden,
And, pacing down the shadowed lanes,
Our listless hands had dropped the reins,
While on the dim road echoed sweet
The music of our horses' feet.

We woke the wild woods close about
With songs and laughter's ringing shout,
Till sudden silence on us fell,
And all the white night's holy spell—
A crystal calm with naught to wake it,
For e'en the blown leaf feared to break it;
There was no sound to stir the air,
Only the moonlight trembled there,
While, as the splendor slowly passed,
Our shadows on the road were cast,
As we two lingered, hand in hand,
Oblivious of the light and land.

Oh! perfect, pale October night,
You give me back my lost delight—
My dreams, that red moon o'er the hill,
The songs my heart remembers still;
Once more I hear our horses' feet
Along the winding roadside beat;
Once more I see our shadows fall,
Yet only shadows after all.
A mist creeps o'er my eyes and bars
The silver stairway of the stars,
And leaves, alas! but this sad grace,
The haunting memory of her face.

THE POET'S MISSION.

Once a poet young and heedless
Sought to please his lady fair,
Saying all things else were needless,
Saving fancies quaint and rare ;
I will sing the springtide weather
All the glad day's golden light,
Fleets of cloudland linked together,
Sailing down the starry night ;

Weave her strains of summer roses,
Strains of dewfall on the leaves,
Dreams the moon-lit night discloses
To the song-birds 'neath the eaves ;
All that fancy holds completest,
All that beauty deems most dear,
Songs the rarest and the sweetest
I will fashion for her ear.

But another spake, What wonder
 Seekest thou to frame in speech?
Every beauty hides thereunder
 Something song can never reach;
Better far than fancy's splendor,
 Songs made slavish for the mart,
Are the ballads true and tender
 Woven for the human heart.

Go forth in the crowded city
 Where the poor toil day by day,
With no kindly words of pity
 Casting sunshine on their way;
Go into those noisome places
 Filled with starving souls of men,
Look upon their haggard faces,
 Sing your songs of beauty then.

Better were it thus to brighten
 By your strains each darkened door,
With God's mighty gift to lighten
 Sorrows of the wretched poor;
Sweet is idle praise, but sweeter
 Is that love the people give,
Guerdon there could ne'er be meeter
 Than within their hearts to live.

He who sings for fame or pleasure
Is forgot when songs are done ;
He who gives the heart its measure
Leaves his shadow on the sun ;
Fair are songs of love and beauty,
Sweetly on the ear they fall,
But the songs of life and duty
Are the grandest songs of all.

IN THE DEEP WOODS.

There is a Sabbath in my soul to-day,
An altitude of peace I seldom reach,
As through the solemn woods my footsteps stray
Where brooks have voices and the shadows speech.

Silent as one who treads cathedral aisles,
I wander onward past dim, leafy shrines,
While sunset through green casements softly smiles
And swings its rosy censer 'mid the pines.

Far overhead the beech-tree's spreading net
Lets in faint glimpses of the sky's blue roof,
The wind-blown leaves, made scarlet by sunset,
Fall tangled in the brown earth's dusky woof.

I hear the young brook whisper to the leaves,
And mark its scattered silver on the moss;
In bluest air the spider deftly weaves
A filmy sail for idle winds to toss.

I pause beside the altars of the trees
Where incense floats from every opening spray,
And like some distant sighing of the seas
Sound the soft wind-harps waking far away.

The air seems as a chalice, and its rim
Is overflowed by sunset's yellow wine,
Anon some falling shadows softly dim
The mystery of its coloring divine.

I smell the vague, warm odor of the grass,
The perfume of past springtimes comes again,
And every breeze that down the glades doth pass
Bears whispers of the silvery summer rain.

In these green woods immortal yearnings wake,
The cares of yesterdays become as dreams,
All lesser things my soul would e'er forsake
To linger here where such enchantment seems.

What bliss to wander from the world set free,
To feel the soft air blowing on my face;
Oh! nameless rapture! he who knows not thee
Hath never known life's one supremest grace.

The leaves and flowers are poems ; every brook
That laves the green stalk of some pliant reed
Is but a sentence in that wondrous book
Where genius finds its great eternal creed.

Here Nature wakes amid her haunts divine
Far grander anthems than earth's feeble hymns ;
What strains aerial haunt the dusky pine,
Whose blackened shade the star of evening dims !

All better, nobler feelings come once more
To linger with me as I worship here,
Like ships returning from an alien shore
I greet them with the silence of a tear.

Fain would I dwell forever thus alone
In these deep woods, unnoted and forgot,
An everlasting calm about me thrown,
The stars of eve to sentinel the spot.

I would not hear the far-off city's hum,
The tumults of the outside life should cease ;
To this still haven nought should ever come
To mar the crystal perfectness of peace.

Oh! song immortal; oh! divinest song,
Where shall I find thee if it be not here?
I will no more return unto the throng,
Here will I rest and deem thee ever near.

The woods shall yield their secret unto me,
The sky smile softly through these leafy bars,
While evermore my feet shall follow thee
Up pathways leading to a land of stars.

A SELFISH SINGER.

“Go, sing of Nature; she alone
Is worthy of the minstrel’s art.”
Oh! poet friend, I fear to own
Your mind is greater than your heart;
The grand, green fields are fair to view,
The solemn hills my soul inspire,
Yet in the busy city, too,
Are altars for song’s deathless fire.

Beyond the selfish greed for pelf,
Beyond the loveless ways of care,
Nature is poet for herself,
And writes her epics every where;
Each tiny leaf the soft wind stirs,
Each bird-song heard on forest ways,
The sea’s deep melodies are hers,
And storm and silence sing her praise.

So he who chants to woo her smiles,
Nor glads the silence of the poor,
Is no true poet, and erewhiles
He turneth angels from his door.
The world may praise him if it will,
To him Fame's laurel crown be given,
Yet all his sweetest songs be still
Too high for earth, too *low* for heaven.

Greater I hold him who can win
From crime the splendor of a tear,
One thought of innocence from sin
By strains the poorest wretch may hear;
Grander I hold him who forsakes
The stars and woods that dream apart,
And on some darkened hearthstone wakes
Song's music for the longing heart.

It is not that his soul forgets
The forest green, the summer hours;
'Tis only that his feet he sets
On thorns while others tread on flowers;
What though the world his song disdains,
Though light and joy his path forsake,
Immortal lips shall breathe *those* strains
Too high for aught save heaven to wake.

A D A S T R A .

My bird of dawn, the world is cold,
Why stay thy gleamy wing?
Go, soar above this gloomy mould
To heaven's blue gates and sing.

Oh! cleave the boundless realms between
The white ranks of the stars,
Where seraphs listen as they lean
From golden window-bars.

Thou hast no portion in dull earth
With all its warring powers,
A fairer country gave thee birth
Than this cold world of ours.

The song that wakens in thy heart
So joyously and clear,
Is but of paradise a part
Brought beautifully near.

Oh! hearkening as the strain outpours,
Its dreams of gladness bringing,
Methinks through heaven's half-shut doors
I hear the angels singing.

Then haste to those sublimer spheres
Beyond our fleeting day,
Go, ere that song is filled with tears,
My bird of dawn, away!

Thou art too frail to face the blast,
The long, cold winter hours;
No, round thy throbbing form is cast
The light of summer flowers,

Thou couldst not brave the proud world's scorn,
Its blame, its careless slight;
Sweet minstrel of a deathless dawn,
Return unto the light,

Fly swiftly where the bright stars be
As censers on thy track.
Ah! who but sighs to follow thee,
Yet who would call thee back?

OMNIA VINCIT AMOR.

This the burden of all ages,
Through all time we hear them call,
“Bow, ye rulers, priests, and sages,
Love is King and Lord of all.”
Poor the mortal past the telling
Who ne’er owned his might divine,
Dark his heart as any dwelling
When the sunlight does not shine.

Though we see his face once only
Ere we quit his presence dear,
Yet he doth not leave us lonely
While his memory lingers near;
It is better to be loyal,
Take the boon his hand doth give,
They who scorn his bounty royal—
They exist, they do not live.

Love is theme of song and story,
Great, resistless for all while,
We forget our dreams of glory
'Neath the glamor of his smile;
Home and country, fame, ambition,
Antony for Egypt gave,
Though love's beauteous fruition
Was defeat, a sword, the grave.

Beatrice to heaven was lifted
On the wings of Dante's song;
Leonora, Tasso gifted
With his fancy's magic throng.
Dreams of priestly rank and power,
Hope of sacred joys above,
Abelard in one mad hour
Lost for Heloise's love.

On a scaffold grim, expiring,
Chastelard and love did part—
Yea, he met his death desiring
But one throb of Mary's heart;
The proud queen of Briton's strand
From her throne to Essex bent,
In her anguish cursed the hand
That withheld the ring he sent.

We are creatures Love doth fashion
Good or evil as he may,
When he calls, each other passion
To his mighty power gives way;
Every thing that is undying,
Every thought or act sublime,
For Love's sake abides, defying
Change, oblivion, death, and time.

Hand in hand with life he goeth
Where the rose and cypress wave,
And his smile the brighter showeth
In the shadow of the grave.
They who e'er disdain Love's kindness,
From his gracious presence flee,
Fools they are who, in their blindness,
Scorn an immortality.

A V E M A R I A .

The light and splendor of the day are fleeting,
 The last gleam fades o'er wood and hills and dells,
 While on the air, like angel voices greeting,
 Sounds the faint chiming of the vesper bells;
 We bow our heads in silent awe to listen
 Those echoes drifting heavenward one by one,
 While rosy stars along their pathway glisten,
 And earth grows glad because the day is done—
 Ave Maria!

The tired laborer hearkens as they greet him,
 And hastens on his happy homeward way,
 Where children wait beside the door to meet him
 And crown with love the hard toil of the day;
 E'en as those sweet tones on the ear are falling
 The old man bows his silver locks in prayer.
 Voices imploring from earth's haunts are calling,
 And eyes gaze heavenward through the golden air—
 Ave Maria!

The mother bends her head to greet those numbers,
Holding her little child upon her knee,
And, as she gazes on its happy slumbers,
Wreathes some sweet hymn into a lullaby;
E'en they, the outcasts by the world forsaken,
Who grope on through the darkness of the night,
Feel those soft tones some better impulse waken,
Some home-sick longing for the blessed light—
Ave Maria!

The worshiper beside the altar hearkens
The message sent forth from the belfry high,
Till, as the sanctuary slowly darkens,
He dreams angelic visitants are nigh;
Each sound that stirs the silver air's dominion
Seems not to him what earth's harsh noises seem,
But as the sweeping of seraphic pinions
Haunting the silence of some happy dream—
Ave Maria!

Looking toward the bell-tower gray and hoary,
That looms up faintly 'mid the stars of night,
Methinks bright beings clad in robes of glory
Smile downward from those parapets of light.
Ring out, sweet bells, across eve's dusky portals,
There is no place your voices may not reach,
Bear with your echoes to that land immortal
The hopes, the prayers we may not frame in speech—
Ave Maria!

ORA PRO ME.

The glory of the sunset is declining,
The silent cloisters grow all cold and gray,
Sweet saint, whom these bare walls are e'er enshrining—
Ora pro me!

I can not go while your fair face is shining
Forth from the shadows like a dream of day,
As round that silvern cross your hands are twining—
Ora pro me!

The land outside is sun-bereft and lonely,
Yet past my face your sad eyes turn that way,
Give me one smile before we part—one only—
Ora pro me!

Can you recall the happy days together,
When through the leafy woods we sought to stray?
Have you forgotten that golden autumn weather?—
Ora pro me!

The exile flowers upon the altar gleaming
Must woo your fancy to each by-gone day
Till prayers are all forgot in tender dreaming—
Ora pro me!

'Twas but a year ago, when glad with laughter
We stole along the dusky, homeward way,
Alas! no more your feet will follow after—
Ora pro me!

This is the end of all, love's beauteous vision
E'en like the sunset glory fades away,
Yet still I pause in mournful indecision—
Ora pro me!

Nay, know not why my tired lips are pleading
For prayers, unless it be for love's flight to stay;
'Tis for love's sake I linger interceding—
Ora pro me!

Farewell! between our faces now is falling
The shadow of the cloisters cold and gray,
While distant bells to twilight hymns are calling—
Ora pro me!

Farewell! thus, soon or late, all hearts must sever,
Each one must go upon a different way,
Here at your feet I close love's book forever—
Ora pro me!

TANTUM ERGO.

'Tis now the vesper hour, soft sunlight streams
In golden radiance through the casement high,
Staining the marble with broad, ruddy gleams,
Like drifting flushes down a sunset sky ;

Upon the altar starry tapers shine
With mellow radiance, while the lilies white
Hang brimming o'er with slumberous amber wine,
Poured by the sunbeams in each chalice white ;

Slowly the circling mists of incense rise,
Fading serenely mid the lapses dim,
Far through the jasper gates of paradise
Float chords æolian of seraphic hymn ;

Adown dim aisles the long gray shadows creep,
The organ sigheth on the trembling air,
Till one by one the sweet notes fall asleep,
And silence hovers o'er us like a prayer ;

The tabernacle portals open wide,
The kneeling priest awaits his kingly guest,
Who cometh in the dreamy eventide,
While day-light drifts adown the beauteous West.

Hark! hark! divinest music wakes around,
And every head bows lowly at that cry,
Earth's guardian spirits echo back the sound,
"Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus passeth by."

A stillness falls like dew, the kneeling throngs
Cast down the heart's palm branches at His feet,
Voices celestial chant angelic songs,
And seraph harps rain silvery echoes sweet.

We know the King hath gone upon his way,
Lo! as we lift our dazzled eyes in prayer,
A glow seems to gild the shadows gray,
And *something* tells us that He hath been there.

Now softly fade, oh! thou divinest light,
Veil thy rose gleamings 'neath a starry pall,
Still, through the solemn lapses of the night
Our hearts shall feel God's benediction fall.

I.

THE NOVICE.

Farewell! I do not ask thee to remember,
Too well I know that thou can'st ne'er forget ;
We dream of roses in life's bleak December,
And when we sigh we say that we regret.
Ah, no! the hour that ope'd love's beauteous portal,
That dream of joy that charmed us with its spell,
That bliss, that woe abides, fore'er immortal,
Though hands unclasp and cold lips breathe farewell.

Canst thou forget when beauty bows before thee,
Whose lips first taught the words to love's sweet strain?
Can'st thou forget with joy's bright sunshine o'er thee
The smile, the glance, that may not wake again?
How then can I beside the altar's whiteness
Forego the dreams of happy times now flown?
Before me loom the phantoms of past brightness,
Those golden days you called me all thine own.

In vain I draw these holy robes around me,
In vain I kneel in agony of prayer,
Before the shrine each lost delight hath found me,
I seek the cross, alas! thy face is there;
It haunts the incense that toward heaven is wending,
That heaven my poor soul vainly strives to seek,
And when I join the hymns to God ascending,
Thy name, thy name is all my lips will speak.

The exile flowers upon the altar gleaming,
Recall those happy hours too sweet to last,
Till prayers are all forgot in tender dreaming
O'er those bright moments of a cherished past;
Aye! cherished still, though every tie is riven
That bound me unto joy and life and light,
My vows to heaven forever more are given,
'Tis heaven that calls me, not my lost delight.

When the soft dark about the convent falleth,
And other souls are wrapt in peace profound,
Thy voice, beloved, across the stillness calleth,
And this poor heart respondeth to the sound;
Once more, once more I hasten forth to meet thee,
The past returns like some familiar strain,
With outstretched hands and trembling lips I greet thee
All else forgot—we live, we love again.

Alas! no rest to this lost soul is given,
I linger e'er between sunshine and night
In vision's gaze on love's forbidden heaven,
And find my hell with dawn's returning light.
So great is sin, so great is heaven, I falter,
Angels and demons cheer me or appall,
But when thy face sublimes the starry altar,
I feel that love is greater far than all.

II.

THE CONVENT DOOR.

I lingered by the lonely convent door,
The light was fading, and the day was done,
While like a glory on the time-worn floor
Fell the last radiance of the setting sun;
A wind stole up from some near Southern sea
And stirred the dusky rose-vines fitfully.

The narrow windows flamed with scarlet fires,
And o'er the waving tree-tops rose in view
The gleaming crests of slim cathedral spires,
Their sculptured foam outlined against the blue;
From some gray bell-tower fell faint, dreary notes
Flung on the air from sweet bells' silvern throats.

The chapel door stood open; I could mark,
Bright as a star hung on its glistening chain,
An altar lamp glow 'mid the purple dark,
Swinging in perfect measure with the strain
The nuns within were chanting, till the air
Seemed freighted with sweet cadences of prayer.

Tapers were shining on the altar high,
Where sleepy lilies swung their censers white,
And like the blue of springtime in the sky
A mist of violets glimmered in the light,
Wafting rare incense through the reaches dim,
In homage to the viewless seraphim.

I knelt upon the floor so bare and cold,
And gazed within upon the low-bowed throng,
Where age's wintry locks and youth's soft gold
Were blent together by a chord of song;
Oh! as I saw this vision fair arise,
Methought e'en earth might boast its paradise.

Softly the music ceased, the tender bars
Of melody aerial slowly died,
While drifting silver of the new-blown stars
Rippled along the altar's carven side,
Till finally the radiant tide did creep
Where the pale light fell o'er the flowers asleep.

The worshipers withdrew ; e'en as they passed
Their white robes caught a splendor from the light ;
I watched them disappear, until the last
Faint footfall echoed on the quiet night ;
The altar lamp still drifted to and fro
Like some rare blossom on its stalk ablow.

Slowly I left that hermitage of prayer,
And swung the heavy gate back in its place ;
The land outside seemed most divinely fair,
Turning unto the stars its shadowed face,
While o'er the convent towers gaunt and gray
The benediction of the moonlight lay.

TO ELLIOT POE.

Good-night, and pleasant dreams, good-night!
 My little King of Hearts;
The sickle moon shines softly bright,
 The rosy day departs,
And sparrows spread their wings in flight—
Good-night, and pleasant dreams, good-night!

Good-night, and pleasant dreams, good-night!
 Oh, blest be thy repose!
May slumbers veil those eyes so bright,
 As shadows veil the rose,
My little king, my heart's delight—
Good-night, and pleasant dreams, good-night!

Good-night, and pleasant dreams, good-night!
 The twilight songs are sung,
The fairy tales have taken flight
 To lands where joy is young,
Go, seek them over seas of light—
Good-night, and pleasant dreams, good-night!

Good-night, and pleasant dreams, good-night!
Fain would I have the power
To keep thee e'er this childish height,
And lovely as a flower,
To smooth as now these locks so bright—
Good-night, and pleasant dreams, good-night!

Good-night, and pleasant dreams, good-night!
My little King of Hearts;
The yellow stars bloom out in sight,
The fair young moon departs,
Oh! sleep, ere love and joy take flight—
Good-night, and happy dreams, good-night!

THE LAND OF THE STORIES.

TO YANDELL ROBERTS.

We sat by the fire together,
My pretty Brown Eyes and I,
Outside was the wintry weather,
And the gray of the evening sky;
But within was the red light straying
All over his face and hair,
As wearied so soon of playing,
He nestled beside my chair.

Then he begged for some fairy stories,
And listened with parted lips
As I called back the golden glories
That had sailed with the year's white ships;
With the beautiful faith of childhood,
So simple, so pure, so good,
He sought in the English wild-wood
For little Red-Riding Hood.

On, on where the birds were calling
His fancy roamed wild and free,
And bright as the sunlight falling
Through boughs where the blossoms be;
Bold Robin Hood came to meet him,
And hidden among the leaves,
Laughing aloud to greet him,
Was one of the Forty Thieves.

We crept through the haunted palace,
Where the Sleeping Beauty lay,
And saw in the rose's chalice
The form of some drowsy fay;
Oh! his eyes grew wide with wonder
At the bean-stalk grand and high,
And he shook as he heard the thunder
Of Blue-Beard's footsteps nigh.

The moonlight was softly straying
O'er the cabin half hid in snow,
Where old Uncle Ned was playing
To the wolves as they crouched below;
While deep in the forest olden
The Babes in the Wood were found,
'Neath a shroud of the leaves so golden
The robins had spread around.

With a faith that no doubt abashes,
With an ardor that naught could damp,
He sought in the rosy ashes
For Aladdin's magic lamp;
Oh! his face grew sad with longing,
And he clung to my clasping hand,
As the wonderful tales went thronging
Through the portals of fairy-land.

Brighter the flames came creeping,
And the air outside grew colder,
While little Brown Eyes lay sleeping,
Pressed closely against my shoulder;
Then I whispered, Oh! childish being,
Whose faith reaches wide and far,
Dream on in thy slumber, seeing
The land where the stories are.

MY HERO—YANDELL ROBERTS.

Through the mossy depths of the wild-wood,
Where the buds and the blossoms be,
And the brook in its singing childhood
Goes on to the sounding sea,
I walked in the days of summer,
And my hero went with me ;

Oh! the shadows were dark and sober,
Oh! the sunshine was clear and bright,
But brown as the dusk October
Were the locks of my heart's delight,
While his eyes had the starry luster
That beams in the skies at night.

No trumpets awoke to greet him,
No minstrels came forth to play,
There were only the birds to meet him
With songs of the blushing May,
As he went through the leafy coverts,
In the glow of the perfect day.

Far down in the wood's recesses
We wandered still hand in hand,
And the light on his dusky tresses
Was the sunbeam's yellow band,
A halo to crown this hero
Who journeyed to fairy-land.

We passed where the shadows slumbered,
Awaiting the kiss of noon,
Where the leaves' soft songs were numbered
And bound in the book of June,
Still seeking the wondrous country
That lies 'neath the silver moon.

Oh! there in enchanted castles,
'Mid beauties and bards of old,
Were waiting his elfin vassals,
Who blew on their horns of gold
Till the sheep in the cloudland pastures,
Came into the sunset fold.

At last were the gates of wonder
Thrown open adown the sky,
So our fond hands fell asunder,
And my hero said good-by ;
" No one goes here," he whispered,
" But dreamers, such as I."

Saddened by earth's dark vision,
Soiled by its clinging stains,
I saw not his land elysian,
Heard not its siren strains;
Ah! but to reach that country,
The realm where my hero reigns.

AT THE PLAY.

TO MARY ANDERSON.

I saw thee in thy beauty and thy splendor,
Crowned with the laurels that thy genius won,
While every feeling heart made glad surrender,
And there was sadness when the play was done ;

But even where the lights and music blended,
And thy soft accents wooed the captive ear,
Unto the past my vagrant fancy wended
To other scenes, and other days more dear.

The little convent school rose up before me,
Where first we met in happy hours of yore ;
Oh ! in that vision softly trembled o'er me
The skies of youth whose blue is mine no more.

The black-robed Sisters with their gentle faces
Stole silently across the polished floor,
Our school-mates smiled from their familiar places,
And springtide breezes whispered at the door ;

Once more the sun its yellow light was flinging
Athwart the casement all the noon-tide hours;
Once more I heard the Angelus soft ringing
From out the old cathedral's airy towers.

Then, as those sweet tones stirred the golden weather,
And echoes bore them through the quiet air,
Oh! side by side, we knelt and breathed together
The tender words of that celestial prayer.

'Twas but a vision that too soon was banished,
The music faltered and the lights burnt low,
And when I looked, behold! thou too hadst vanished,
The play was over—it was time to go.

But, ah! I pondered, if amid your splendor
Your heart ere yearned for those glad times of yore,
Or if the Angelus, so sweet and tender,
Recalled the little convent school once more.

Not then the world's bright idol I esteem thee,
The *world* that crowns thee with immortal bays;
Ah, no! far dearer is the thing I deem thee,
The friend, the school-mate of life's purest days.

AT SUNSET.

TO MRS. SALLIE WARD DOWNS.

I saw thee at the sunset hour,
Ere young stars trembled into sight,
And, oh! methought thy beauty's power
Could charm and stay the fading light.

Though but one glance, one fleeting smile
To my rapt vision then was given,
I turned away, and dreamt erewhile,
'Tis thus an angel looks in heaven.

The dusty road seemed strangely fair,
The trees a softer shadow cast,
And tranced was sunset's golden air
As if a strain of music passed.

Thou didst recall all beauteous things,
That light, that joy we crave in vain,
The glory of eternal springs,
The chord that crowns some perfect strain.

But vain the minstrel's power to thrill
In praise of thee his votive lute,
The inspiration greater still
Than song or fancy makes him mute.

Enough that I have looked on thee,
And owned thee for my spirit's queen;
Aye! felt that paradise must be
Where'er thy radiant face was seen.

This is enough, be thou always
A sunset memory fair and bright,
Thy beauty is its own sweet praise,
And when thou goest—falls the night.

LADY BROCADE.

TO DOUGLASS SHERLEY.

The sunset shines red down the alleys
Of the garden, old-fashioned and prim,
Where a wind of the West faintly dallies
With the leaves on each low-dropping limb;
The long walk all lonely and still is
Checkered over with sunshine and shade,
Girt about with the whiteness of lilies—
But where is my Lady Brocade?

See, the flowers are a-blow for her pleasure,
Fairer far than in days gone before,
And the strain of some quaint, stately measure
Waits the step that once graced it of yore;
One faint star trembles out in the gloaming,
Where the cloud's silver edges are frayed,
And the birds through the twilight are roaming—
But where is my Lady Brocade?

The lilacs are budding and blooming
Through the hush of the dim vesper hours,
All the warm winds with fragrance perfuming,
Or falling in great purple showers;
The roses lean upward to meet her,
From the thickets where oft she has strayed,
And the light fadeth fleeter and fleeter—
But where is my Lady Brocade?

The lamp from her window hath vanished,
The old house is darkened and drear,
The strains of the lutes have been banished
Like the birds at the fall of the year;
The wide rooms are just as she left them,
Ere the last bar of music was played,
Time has faded, yet has not bereft them—
But where is my Lady Brocade?

All the beauties in satins and laces,
All the gallants in velvet and gold,
Have stolen away to their places
'Neath the slumberous calm of the mould;
Silent now is the ripple of laughter,
Silent, too, is the soft serenade,
Echo only comes loitering after—
But where is my Lady Brocade?

I stand in the long hall and hearken
For the fall of the foot on the stair,
While the shadows of night slowly darken,
But in vain do I wait for her there ;
The wind rustles fitfully nigh me,
With the frou-frou her rich robes once made,
And her dog crouches wistfully by me—
But where is my Lady Brocade ?

In vain is the quest, friend or lover,
She hath flown with the lute's dying bars,
The summers cast rose leaves above her,
And the sky lit her flight with its stars ;
She hath tired of the music and masking,
Her part in life's drama is played,
Nor replies to the question you're asking,
“ But where is my Lady Brocade ? ”

HER ROOM.

THE DEAD LILY.

I pause beside the door and look within
The room she left one year ago to-day,
And as one turneth from the outside din
To kneel at some cathedral shrine and pray,
I linger here where broods no earthly taint,
Recalling dreams of her, my vanished saint.

The warm light trickles through the window bars,
Nestling within the curtain's heavy fold,
And o'er the floor the primrose drops its stars,
Blighted, like her, by winter's icy cold ;
While outside where we strayed in happier hours
The springtime calleth to the waiting flowers.

The blueness of the skies gleams on the walls
As if she sought always to bring heaven near,
And as the rose of sunset fades and falls
I turn expectant thinking she is here ;
With peaceful twilight stealing soft and slow
Back to this room she left one year ago.

She sits beside the hearth just where the glare
Of firelight falls upon her as of yore,
Gilding the dusky tresses of her hair
With golden glints they held in days before,
While gazing far away her wistful eyes
Seem filled with happy dreams of paradise.

I stretch my hand out eagerly to clasp
The pearly whiteness of her trailing dress,
Only to find 'tis empty air I grasp,
And she a vision of lost happiness;
Yet even as I pause here all forlorn,
I can not realize that she is gone.

No matter if I stand quite still or stir
About the desolation of this place,
My fancy e'er recalls some dream of her,
And brings me back the memory of her face;
Till stooping o'er her little empty bed,
I kiss the impress left by that dear head.

Each day I come to this my heart's lone shrine,
Bringing the flowers she loved in days of yore,
Thinking that should she come back she will find
Her little room just as it was before;
So she will know that suns may rise and set,
And days pass on, but love can ne'er forget.

Thus do I while away the time so dreary,
Thus do I pass the hours so dull and slow,
Dreaming of her whose feet, of earth grown weary,
Sought the bright uplands just one year ago ;
And thinking thus of all her rare perfection,
The earth holds naught but that sweet recollection.

I.

BEAUTIFUL DREAMER.

IN MEMORY OF SALLIE TRUXTON SHREVE.

The wind 'mid the cedars is sobbing and sighing
Like the strains of a lute growing sweeter in dying,
And the flowers lie asleep 'neath the light of the moon
As it hangs like a blossom blown open too soon ;
There is stillness profound in this saddest of places,
Where the marbles bend over the beautiful faces,
As I stand here alone by thy grass-covered bed,
With the dews at my feet and the stars overhead,
While the night seemed to whisper ere yet it was gone,
Oh ! beautiful dreamer, sleep on, sleep on.

The moon's silver glory as softly it passes
Illumines the plumes of the tall waving grasses,
And the lily leans up toward the wonderful light,
Till its tremulous shadow is cast on the night ;
The dove peereth forth from the dark, misty covers,
Where the leaves on the boughs whisper softly like lover
The dew falleth thick on the faint scented clover,
Whose blossoms of pink veil thy loveliness over,
And the roses grow red as warm hints of the dawn—
Oh ! beautiful dreamer, sleep on, sleep on.

The lamps in the glad homes shine bright through the bars,
But thy window is dark as a night without stars,
E'en the rooms that re-echoed thy glad tones of yore
Are silent as nests where the birds sing no more ;
The singers have tired of their songs, every one,
The dancers have flown ere the music was done,
For you wearied so soon of the minstrels and masking,
Though strains rose like mists from the sea at your asking ;
Oh ! you drooped like a flower by the frost left forlorn,
My beautiful dreamer, sleep on, sleep on.

Aye ! sleep on for e'er, for no sound may awaken
Thy slumber profound, and the rose lightly shaken
Till it casts on thy pillow its tribute of dew,
In its beauty and grace is an emblem of you ;
The snow of the winter its rare splendor covers,
As the earth o'er the flower of thy loveliness hovers,
And the springtimes the tints to its petals restore,
But the bloom will revisit thy fair cheek no more ;
From the Mays to Decembers, from darkness till dawn,
Oh ! beautiful dreamer, sleep on, sleep on.

No more down these green slopes your light feet will pass
Like winds of the South over blossom and grass,
No more by the hearthstone those dark eyes will shine
Till their splendor makes all they illumine divine ;
No more through the rose-haunted garden you'll wander,

Where the moon and the dew all their bright treasures
And the music will wake in the ball-room in vain [squande
For the queen of the dance may not shine there again;
Like a flower, like a song, like a star, you have gone,
Oh! beautiful dreamer, sleep on, sleep on.

II.

UNDER THE ROSES.

IN MEMORY OF SALLIE TRUXTON SHREVE.

We stood on the slope of the hillside together,
Silent and tearful each one that was there,
Up through the hush of the glad, golden weather
Floated the last solemn words of a prayer;
Like soft benedictions from heaven descending,
Gray mists of the twilight fell over the steep,
As there where the stars with the sunset were blending
Under the roses we laid her to sleep.

Lightly they leant from the thickets to cover
The motionless form and the beautiful face,
While tenderer far than the hand of a lover, [place;
The soft southern wind strewed their blooms o'er the
The dews like the tears of the angels were falling
And veiling with silver that flower covered heap,
So sadly and slow while the wild birds were calling,
Under the roses we laid her to sleep.

Like a star that went out at the height of its splendor,
Like a sweet song unended, a story half told,
Like a flower of the springtime so lovely and tender,
Was the beautiful being we placed 'neath the mould;
The grave had thrown open its mystical portals,
Where the shades of oblivion their watch ever keep,
And we gave to its silence our fairest of mortals,
As under the roses we laid her to sleep.

Dead! she whose laugh was the gayest and sweetest,
She whose lost face was a dream to recall,
Whose foot in the dance was the lightest and fleetest,
And her sweet imperfection more winning than all;
At the breaking of day with the stars she departed,
Went down toward the valley so lonely and deep,
By the lamp of the sunset, subdued, broken-hearted,
Under the roses we laid her to sleep.

Perchance the cold world had too little of pity,
Perchance the long way was too rough for her feet,
So she strayed through the gates of the beautiful city,
Where the echoes of harps drifted over each street;
Bowers meet for her were the gardens elysian, [creep
Where dreams of the summer through glad slumber
And I looked on her there in an exquisite vision,
As under the roses we laid her to sleep.

With the warm golden stars shining softly above her,
Veiled with flowers that in some by-gone moment she
We gazed on her pillow, each one that did love her, [wore
And felt that the music of lifetime was o'er;
Then where the birds woke their tenderest numbers,
Then where the winds murmured over the steep,
With the moon's early light to illumine her slumbers,
Under the roses we laid her to sleep.

AMELIA'S GRAVE.

(AMELIA B. WELBY, POET.)

“ In the stillness of the starlit hours ”
I seek thy lonely grave,
While peacefully the tired flowers
Dream 'neath the moon's soft wave ;
There is no sound to stir the air
Nor break the calm o'erhead,
The peace that follows hymn and prayer
Broods o'er the quiet dead.

I climb the green slope of the hill,
Where all along my way
Bright tears cling to the flowers as still
They sorrow for the day ;
The perfume of the pine floats sweet
Across the night's dark rim,
Like incense circling round the feet
Of saints and seraphim.

Here, where the headstones tall and white
Are lit by heaven's soft flame,
I see, transfigured by the light,
A shaft that bears thy name ;
Thine image, too, is sculptured there
Upon the time-worn stone,
And thou, the rarest of the rare,
Art 'neath its shade alone.

I read upon the stone these words
You wrote in days gone by,
Begging the joyous summer birds
To fold their bright wings nigh,
“ And pour their songs of gladness forth
In one unbroken strain
O'er lips whose broken melody
Would ne'er be heard again.”

Sweet singer, there are few flowers near
To stay the warbler's wing,
So he may glad thy listening ear
With songs from lands of spring ;
Only the starlight's silver beam,
The moonlight's misty wave,
May pass like some exquisite dream
Above thy quiet grave.

Thou hast no need of flower or song,
For lutes of summer air,
Thy melodies celestial throng
Around thee every where;
I muse while standing sadly here
Beneath the tender sky,
How one whose spirit knew no peer,
Aye! one like thee couldst die.

E'en as a pilgrim at a shrine
Seeks all his soul holds dear,
I linger by this grave of thine
To mourn the minstrel here.
Oh! silent singer on the hill,
Dream on forever more,
Or wake thy deathless music still
On some diviner shore.

All we poor vassals of the lute
Live out our little day,
Till death doth make the music mute,
And beckons us away;
But, oh! how sweet to think perchance
That on these slopes serene,
Some one, beneath the moon's bright glance,
Will keep our memories green

As I do thine, fair soul, afar,
 Whose songs life's pauses thrill,
As when, though vanished is the star,
 We dream it shineth still;
And while I place upon thy grave
 This rose that blossoms nigh,
One boon alone of heaven I crave,
 To sing like thee, *to sing like thee* and die.

WITH A LOCK OF HAIR.

IN MEMORY OF MRS. ANNIE COOK (STATE LIBRARIAN).

This raven tress that softly lies,
Tied by a ribbon pure and white,
Must lift your fancy to the skies,
Where she who gave it dwells to-night.

Methinks in those wide realms of bliss,
Where songs of rapture flood the air,
That angel head will hardly miss
This fondly cherished lock of hair.

Or, if a seraph's memory strays
To this bleak earth where sadness lowers,
And casts o'er the remembered days
The brightness of a land not ours,

She fondly dreaming must recall
That hour this silken tress was given,
Till through the starry air will fall
The tear that memory wakes in heaven.

It is not meet a stranger's hand
This token of the past should keep,
Let him who loved each silken strand
Bend softly o'er the gift and weep ;

So I return it to your care,
Unseen by other eyes than mine,
Sole relic of a being fair
Who blooms in other lands divine.

I do not ask you if her look
Was softly sad or sweetly gay,
When this poor little lock she took
And gave to you one by-gone day ;

I do not question what she said
While parting with the raven tress,
Or if her slender, queenly head
Seemed conscious of one charm the less ;

I only know a faithful friend
Holds dear as heaven this ringlet black,
And, honoring his love, I send
The gift of her he worshiped back.

IN MEMORIAM.

(ON THE DEATH OF THEODORE STOUT BELL, M. D.)

Lift up your hearts, ye stricken ones,
Who mourn the lifeless clay,
Behold, the noblest of earth's sons
Hath gone to meet the day;
He could not tarry till the year
Had faltered to its close,
But left this world of sorrow here
For a divine repose.

Deep in the stillness of the night
The silent angel came,
And whispered through the dusky light
Our friend's beloved name;
Then tranquilly he fell asleep
Beneath the stars' soft ray,
And soon in heaven he will keep
His first great New Year's day.

We would not call him back again
With songs he used to love,
For, oh! he listens to the strains
Of seraph harps above;
And as those golden numbers break
Upon his raptured ear,
'Twere vain for earthly lutes to wake—
Earth's tribute be a tear;

Her tribute be the tears of all,
The great, the rich, the poor,
And love shall weave the funeral pall
That veils his slumber o'er;
He brought the sunshine to the blind,
When life seemed sad and dim,
And in their hearts they hold enshrined
Sweet memories of him.

He gave his learning to his land,
He filled the beggar's cup,
And lifted with his aged hand
Some starving genius up.
The little children who have known
The old man's feeble tread,
Will miss the brightness that has flown
With *him*, our cherished dead.

The years in their unceasing round,
Left snow upon his hair,
But looking in his heart we found
The deathless springtime there;
The hands that opened but to cast
Some bounty to the poor,
Rest, oh! so quietly at last—
Their giving times are o'er.

Then lay him tenderly to rest
Beneath the mantling sod,
Nor murmur at the wise behest
Of a benignant God.
Bring all the blossoms of the spring
From out the silent mart,
And cast love's farewell offering
Above that noble heart.

So this pure-hearted friend of ours
May sleep the last long sleep,
While o'er his grave his cherished flowers
Their faithful watch shall keep;
And we shall hold this truth enshrined,
As drift the long years by,
"To live in hearts we leave behind,
Is not, is not to die."

HUSHED.

The fair day hath flown, and the starlight so tender
Falls soft like a blessing o'er forest and hill,
The trees faintly loom through the silvery splendor,
And the voices of birds in their branches are still;
The dew on the floweret is silently falling,
Across the wide fields steals the moon's early light,
Some bird flying homeward is plaintively calling,
But the harp of the minstrel is silent to-night.

Unswapt are the strings, unresponsive the numbers,
Once called up the smile or the tear to the eye,
In silence unbroken each fairy strain slumbers,
So we list for the song and we hear but a sigh;
Oh! vanished for e'er are those beauteous faces,
That once round the bard shone so radiant and bright,
In the dim, leafy woods he recalls their lost graces,
So the harp of the minstrel is silent to-night.

He wanders alone down the green woodland passes,
Where the moon through the leaves shineth faintly and far,
No footstep save his bends the warm whispering grasses,
No eye save his own marks the eve's golden star;
Like the music's sweet notes now each lost friend reposes
Unresponsive to songs that once gave them delight,
Above their calm graves blow the summer's red roses,
So the harp of the minstrel is silent to-night.

Like a dream of the past, like a legend departed,
This singer of old through the dusky wood roams,
He sigheth to rest him, but, ah! heavy-hearted,
For darkened and drear are the once happy homes;
No voice 'mid the silence awakens to greet him,
No face at the window shines happy and bright,
All still are the feet that once hastened to meet him,
So the harp of the minstrel is silent to-night.

Aye! silent for e'er, let the past claim its sweetness,
All the glad songs he sang in life's first rosy flush,
To the past e'en belongs all its rarest completeness,
And the present, alas! can but mourn o'er its hush;
Thus the strains fade away like a lost fairy story,
And the bard dreams alone 'neath the tender starlight,
Upon his chill breast droops his head gray and hoary,
So the harp of the minstrel is silent to-night.



THE SONGS.

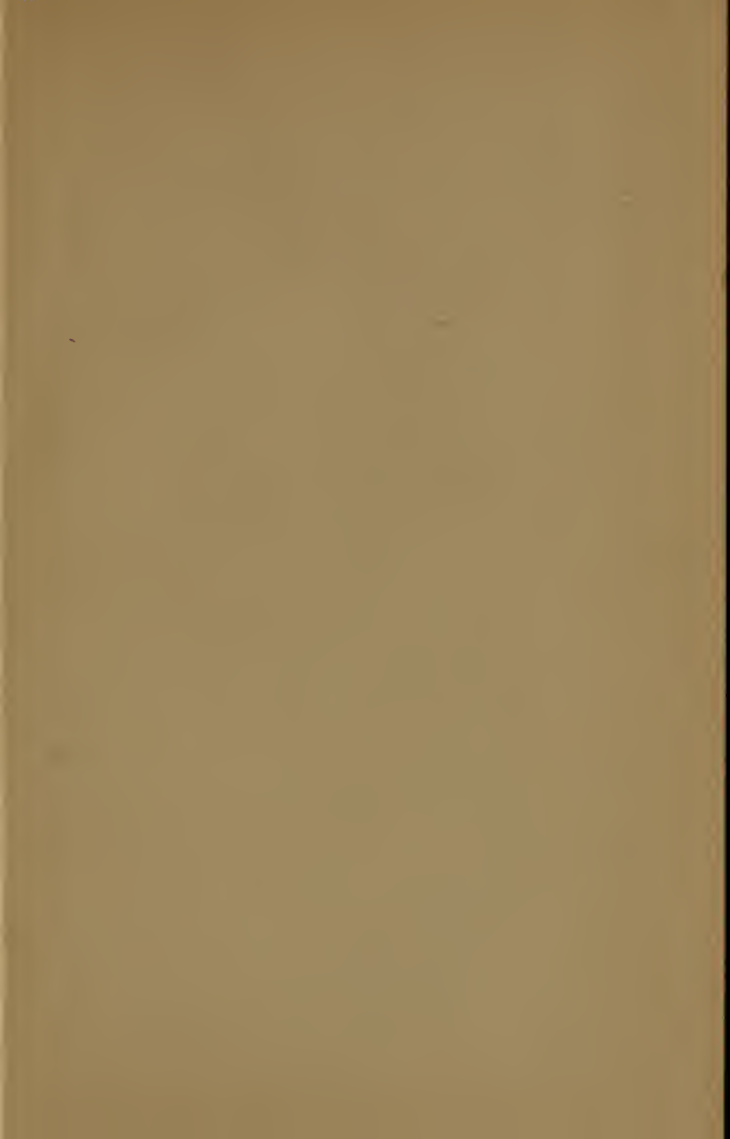
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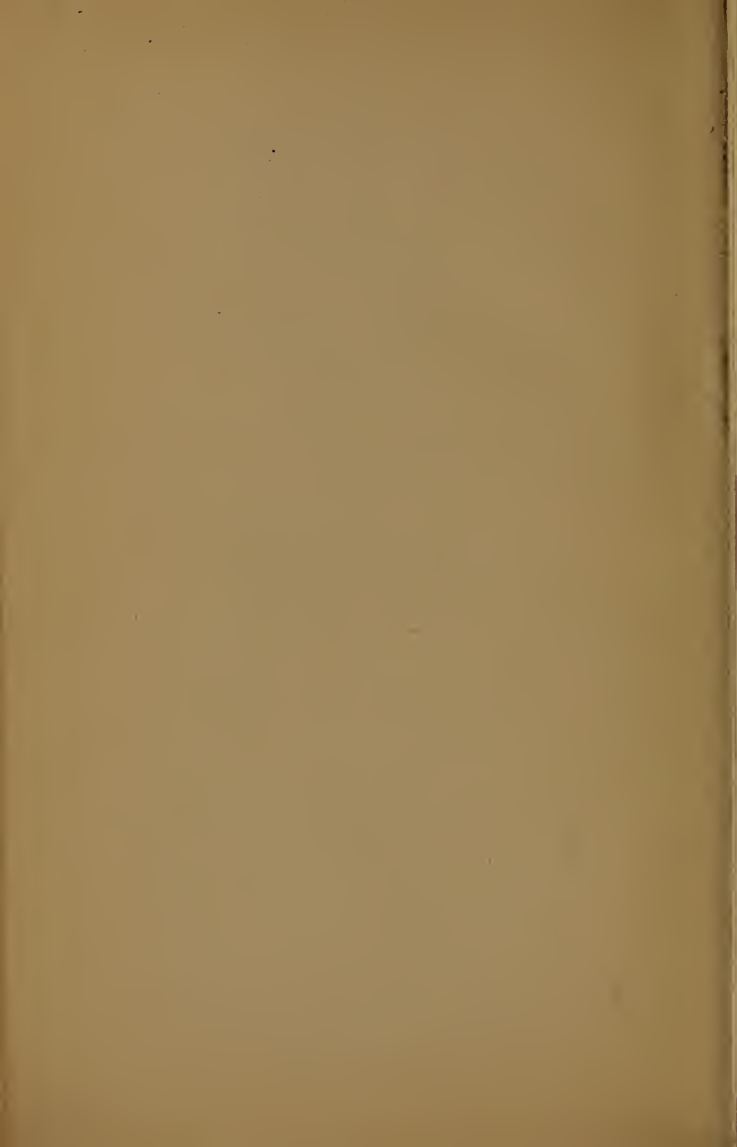
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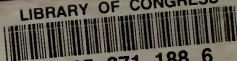








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